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African Violet MAGAZINE

September • October 2009 Volume 62 Number 5

AVSA Information

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FOR ACCURATE SERVICE, SEND YOUR INQUIRIES TO THE CORRECT PERSON. ALWAYS INCLUDE YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS.

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Send check payable to AVSA for new or renewable membership to AVSA Office, 2375 North Street, Beaumont, TX 77702; phone 409-839-4725. Remit in U.S. dollars with draft or check on a USA bank. See Membership Application. Master Card/Visa accepted.

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AFFILIATES: For information on Affiliates or how to organize a chapter, write Lynne Wilson, 645 Hudson Ave., Tampa, FL 33606. *Email* wilsonav@tampabay.rr.com

AVSA SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION: Dr. Elmer Godeny, 11473 Denham Rd., Gonzales, LA 70737.

COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES AND COMMERCIAL SALES & EXHIBITS: Lynn Lombard, 790 Ridgecrest Dr., Colfax, CA 95713. For information on convention entries or sales room, contact Lynn Lombard, *Email* <lynn_lombard@worldnet.att.net>

CONVENTION AWARDS: Jan. issue. Send suggestions or contributions for convention awards to Judy Carter, 1825 W. Lincoln St., Broken Arrow, OK 74012-8509. *Email* <AVSAawards@valomet.com>.

CONVENTION PROGRAM: Send special requests for workshop programs or interesting speakers to Kathy Lahti, Convention Director, 4157 Oliver Ave. N.W., Annandale, MN 55302. *Email* <lahti@lakedalelink.net> If interested in sponsoring a national convention in your area, contact Convention Director.

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MVL SUPPLEMENTS: Download from AVSA website, or order from AVSA office for $1.00. Orders in writing only. Send any correction and/or description of new cultivars with hybridizer's name to: Joe Bruns, 1220 Stratford Lane, Hanover Park, IL 50130.

MEMBERSHIP CARDS: Sent to Associate Members. Renewing members receive card on white protective cover of AVM.

OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE: AVSA Secretary, Nancy Hayes, 9 Cobblestone Rd., Bloomfield, CT 06002-3003.

PLANT REGISTRATION: Joe Bruns, 1220 Stratford Ln., Hanover Park, IL 60203-2667. *E-mail* <janice@qwip.net>.

RESEARCH: Send suggested projects for scientific research or names of interested, qualified, potential research personnel to Dr. Jeff Smith, 3014 W. Amherst Rd., Muncie, IN 47304.

SHOW SCHEDULE APPROVER: For information on Shows, AVSA Awards, and Approving Schedules write to: Meredith Hall, P. O. Box 370, Marlin, TX 76661. *E-mail* <mhall370@earthlink.net>. **Do not send Show Schedules by E-mail - this address is for information ONLY.** Please check for new prices on AVSA Show Packets.

Due to increases in shipping costs, the following rates for the SSA packet and AVSA collection rosettes are effective now: $5.00 when requesting the SSA packet with no rosettes; $12.50 when requesting the SSA packet and one or two rosettes; $20.00 when requesting the SSA packet and two sets of rosettes; $27.50 when requesting the SSA packet and three sets of rosettes.

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ARTICLES BY MEMBERS, COLUMNISTS AND MEMORIALS: Send to Editor.

Please Note: Deadlines - Articles and Columnists: Jan. issue - Oct. 1; Mar. issue - Dec. 1; May issue - Feb. 1; July issue - Apr 1; Sept. issue - June 1; Nov. issue - Aug. 1.

COMING EVENTS: Send to Editor.

Coming Events Deadlines: - Jan. issue - Nov. 1; Mar. issue - Jan. 1; May issue - Mar. 1; July issue - May 1; Sept. issue - July 1; Nov. issue - Sept. 1.

ADVERTISING MANAGER: Advertising rates and information: Cindi Nofziger, 1500 NE Mayview, Albany, OR 97321. *E-mail* <ccnofziger@comcast.net> **(Ad rates on web site: AVSA.org).**

ADVERTISING DEADLINES: Jan/Feb. issue - Nov. 1; Mar/Apr. issue - Jan. 1; May/June issue - Mar. 1; July/Aug. issue - May 1; Sept./Oct. issue - July 1; Nov./Dec. issue - Sept. 1.

BACK ISSUES: Complete your set now. Request price list of available issues from Beaumont office. Send SASE for list.

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BOYCE EDENS RESEARCH FUND: Send contributions to Marlene Buck, 17235 N. 106th Ave., Sun City, AZ 85373-1958.

BUILDING MAINTENANCE FUND: Send contributions to Susan Hapner, 35 Ridge Point Dr., Chesterfield, MO 63017.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Send new address at least 30 days before it is to take effect, along with old address, to AVSA office in Beaumont.

TALLY TIME: Heather Menzel, 135 N. Main St., Yardley, PA 19057. *E-mail* <hmenzel@erols.com>.

The African Violet Magazine (ISSN 0002-0265) is published bi-monthly: January, March, May, July, September, November.
Periodical postage is paid by The African Violet Society of America, Inc., a non-profit organization, at 2375 North Street, Beaumont, TX 77702 and at additional mailing offices.
Subscription $30.00 per year which is included in membership dues. • Copyright 2009 The African Violet Society of America, Inc.
POSTMASTER: Please send change of address form 3579 to African Violet Magazine, 2375 North Street, Beaumont, TX 77702

African Violet MAGAZINE

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September • October Volume 62 Number 5

CONTENTS

FEATURES

To All AVSA Members: Exciting Changes are Coming in 2010! . . . 5
'Plumberry Glow' – Kathy Lahti . . . 9
Effects of Various Light Intensities on Germination of AV Seeds – Ronn Nadeau . . . 10
'Sassy Sadie' – Paul Sorano . . . 12
'Breaking News' – Kent Stork . . . 13
'Episcia 'Thad's Red Crocodile' – Leonard Re . . . 13
Guilty as Charged: Managing Your African Violet Addiction – Mary S. Schaeffer . . . 14
Tight Crowns and Stunted Growth – Deanna Stewart . . . 15
You Have New Members! Now What? – Kathy Bell . . . 15
'Milky Way Trail' – Hans Inpijn . . . 16
Reclassification of the Species – Bill Foster . . . 19
'Rhapsodie Sophia': To Hell and Back – Linda D. Garramone . . . 22
What Is Wrong With My Plant? – Sue Gardner . . . 24
What is in Your Toolbox? – Marge Huntley . . . 24
The Fortunate Accident – Don Geiss . . . 26
Cutting Back Your Big Sinns – John Beaulieu . . . 28
Cultivating Young African Violet Growers – Joan Russo . 30
How Important is "Scale" in Container Gardens – Pat Hancock . . . 31
AVSA Library Materials For Sale . . . 31
Twenty Years of Chasing the Canary – Rich Follett . . . 32
Plant Symmetry – Dr. Jeff Smith . . . 35
Metropolitan St. Louis AV Council . . . 35
Recognizing Early Signs of Some Pests and Diseases – Sue Gardner . . . 36
You're Never Too Old... – Pat Knight . . . 40
Prepare to Over-Winter Tubers & Rhizomes – Marge Huntley . . . 46
Moon Signs and Planting Guide . . . 46
Planting by Moon Signs . . . 47
Temperatures – Stan Sudol . . . 48
Capillary Matting . . . 50
'Rob's Zoot Suit' – Andrea Worrell . . . 52
'Rosy Cheeks' – Lorna Russell . . . 53
'Texas Space Dust' – Richard Nicholas . . . 53
Floral Design – An Art – Ray Lange . . . 54
Grooming Your African Violets . . . 57
Splash and Dash – Marie Montague . . . 59

DEPARTMENTS

Index of Ads . . . 2
Officers & Staff . . . 2
President's Message – Ron Davidson . . . 3
Editor's Notes – Ruth Rumsey . . . 4
Registration Report – Joe Bruns . . . 5
In Search of New Violets – Dr. Jeff Smith . . . 6
AVSA Building Maintenance Fund – Susan Hapner . . . 7
Boyce Edens Research Fund – Marlene J. Buck . . . 7
Small Talk – Laurel D. Goretsky . . . 8
Shows & Judges – Bill Foster . . . 17
For Beginners – Elmer Godeny . . . 18
Statement of Condition . . . 19
Question Box – Ralph Robinson . . . 20
A Family Portrait – Georgene Albrecht . . . 25
AVSA Booster Fund – Shirley Berger . . . 27
2009 AVSA Library Message – Anne Nicholas . . . 38
"And the winners are..." – Mary J. Corondan . . . 42
Anne & Frank Tinari Endowment Fund – Janet Riemer . 45
In Memory . . . 51
Affiliate Update – Lynne Wilson . . . 57
Coming Events . . . 58
Membership Application . . . 59

CONVENTION

Raleigh 2010 Convention – Specific Awards – Judith Carter . . . 41
The Once and Future Violet in Raleigh, NC – Tom Glembocki . . . 49

Eternal Orbit

Best New Cultivar
AVSA 2009
National Show

Hybridized by:
Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses

Seminiature

Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Index of Advertisers

African Rainforest Conservancy 62
American Orchid Society . . . . . Inside back Cover
AVS of Canada 64
Belisle's Violet House 61
Beverly's Violets/Oyama Planters 62
Bloomlovers . . . . . Inside Back Cover
Bluebird Greenhouses 64
Buckeye & Bluegrass Violets 62
Cape Cod Violetry . . . . . Inside Back Cover
Cedar Creek Violets 63
Cryptanthus Society 60
Dave's Violets 63
Gesneriad Society 63
Growing to Show 61
Hobby Greenhouse 64
Indoor Gardening Supplies 62
Jack's Violets 62
Jan's Workshop . . . . . Inside Back Cover
JoS Violets 62
Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses 61
Mrs Strep Streps 60
Nadeau African Violet Seeds 64
Out of Africa 60
Pat's Pets 62
Patty's Plants & Antiques 60
Physan 20 64
Reed's Greenhouse 60
Selective Gardner 61
Shirley's Bloomin' Blossoms 63
Steven's Plant Shop . . . . . Inside Back Cover
The Planter Depot 63
The Violet Barn . . . . . Back Cover
Travis' Violets 60
Violet Gallery 64
VioletSupply.com 60
Watercamel 63
WWW.AFRICANVIOLETBOOKS.COM 60

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Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.

President's Message

By Ron Davidson, President

941 F. M. 2377 • Red Oak, TX 75154
Email: chiefrond@aol.com

Summer has come and gone. I hope it has not been too hot for our members and their African violets. In Texas it has been quite hot this summer and over the magic number of one hundred too many times. We're looking forward to the cooler days of fall.

I hope everyone has been growing and grooming their violets for the fall shows.

Fall is a great time for me because of the fall regional and state African violet conventions, and the adventures of fall hunting (deer and turkey). If I am not at an African violet show and sale, I will be in the Oklahoma or Texas woods.

The up-grade to the web-site contract has been approved and signed for the *i21 Company* to develop the AVSA web site. The new web site should be on line prior to 2010 AVSA convention. The Internet Committee Chair, Web-master, and Third Vice-President will be monitoring the contractor during this process.

The Membership and Promotion Committee is sending new AVSA members' contact information to all affiliates within their respective areas. I hope the affiliates are contacting these new members to promote their local club. All affiliate presidents should check the AVSA web site to ensure that their club contact person and e-mail address is correct. Many emails sent to club contacts have been returned to the Membership and Promotion Committee.

The Library Committee has requested that our rental fee for the 35 mm slide programs be reduced to accommodate clubs renting them for programs throughout the year. The reduction in the rental fees has been approved. Please look in this issue for the Library Programs that are available and the new, lower rental fees.

Any of the AVSA Directors and Committee Chairs planning to attend regional and state conventions this fall should order some of AVSA's new DVD and CD programs to take with them. This is another good way to raise money for our society. The programs are available through the AVSA office. Last year, my wife, Janice, and I attended three fall conventions and I sold forty-seven library programs for AVSA. The members attending the conventions see the value of these programs and are eager to purchase them for their local clubs.

The 2011 convention is scheduled to be in the Philadelphia/Delaware/New Jersey area. Janice and I had the pleasure of meeting with Kathy Lahti, AVSA Convention Director, and Joan Santino, local affiliate contact, to tour the hotels and areas of interest in the three state area. Kathy will soon be recommending which hotel is best for the AVSA 2011 convention. We visited Gettysburg, Valley Forge, Hershey Chocolate World, and Longwood Gardens while in the area. Our members will have much to see and do during the convention.

I took my own advice for summer travel by visiting some of our commercial members. We stopped by Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses in Dolgeville, NY, and Paul took us on a tour of the greenhouses and his property. It is truly a very pretty layout with a creek running around the property. It is also quite close to the Baseball Hall of Fame.

We also stopped by Dave's Violets in Springfield, Missouri. David Harris gave us the grand tour of his prize-winning *sinningias*. And, yes, of course we purchased a number of plants from both of them to take back to Texas.

We also stopped by and visited former AVSA President Linda Owens and her husband, AVSA Web Master, Jim, in their new home in Springfield, Ohio. They are both doing great in the new surroundings and getting to know their new neighbors.

It was great to get away from the hot weather for a while, but most rewarding were our visits with violet friends and seeing the sites. We saw Niagara Falls, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, battlefields, wineries, and the barns...to include the farmlands along the highways. It was only 102°F when we arrived back in Texas, but with fall we're enjoying some cooler weather.

Happy growing, good luck, and keep smiling.

Ron Davidson
President, AVSA

Editor's Notes

By Ruth Rumsey, AVM Editor

2375 North Street • Beaumont, TX 77702
Email: rrumsey@earthlink.net

It's been a very hot summer in Texas, with weeks of temperatures over 100° F. And even though the African violets in the office are in a nice air-conditioned setting, the lack of humidity and the heat outside have affected them. Fortunately, one of our For Beginner columnists, **Elmer Godeny**, addresses this topic in "Boy...is it HOT! on page 18.

I have to thank my good friend, **Dave Harris**, of Dave's Violets in Springfield, MO. I ran a photo in the last issue of a *Sinningia* (July/Aug '09, pg 36), which Dave grew and entered in the National Show in Reno. This plant won the honor of Best Other Gesneriad in the show. The information I had on the plant listed the name as *S.* 'Ozark Razzamatazz,' Ozark being the name of a series of Dave's *Sinningia* hybrids.

Dave called to let me know that while he did grow and enter the plant, he was not the hybridizer. The true name of the plant is *Sinningia* 'Razzamatazz,' and the hybridizer is named **Shinomura**.

Good news for those clubs who rent slide shows from the AVSA Library for their meeting programs. The cost of these rentals has been significantly reduced to $15 for any new program, and $10 for those over two-years-old. I know many of you were concerned about the cost increase, and AVSA does listen to the membership.

Those of you who call the office wanting to purchase African violet seeds will be pleased to see we have a new advertiser, **Nadeau African Violet Seeds** on page 64. Owner **Ronn Nadeau** has also made a contribution to this issue with his article, "Effects of Various Light Intensities on Germination of African Violet Seeds," on page 10.

At my request, our African violet sleuth, **Rich Follett**, explores the search for yellow African violets on page 32 with his article, "Twenty Years of Chasing the Canary."

Pat Hancock, of Buckeye and Bluegrass Violets, asked me to help her get in touch with a grower named **Charlene**, who sent Pat two of her older plants. Pat's contact information is in her ad on page 62 in this issue.

Remember to support the AVM advertisers, and encourage all commercial members to support AVSA by advertising in the *African Violet Magazine*.

Note to All Groups Registering a Judging School

First, many thanks are due Elinor Skelton for her long years serving as the Judging School Registrar. I have modeled my set of directions and registration form on hers.

However, it greatly expedites the process if everything can be done by email, with minimal help from our friendly snails. Please contact me at ruthloomis@msn.com, and I'll email forms and instructions. The filled-in application is then emailed back to me.

At the same time, you will mail a check for the $15.00 fee, made out to AVSA, to Edna Rourke, the AVSA Treasurer. (Edna Rourke, 99 Old Stratford Rd., Shelton, CT 06484). A form to enclose with the check is included with the email you receive from me.

This is much simpler than my receiving the check and sending it on to Edna, and I prefer to stay out of the money loop.

When I hear from Edna, that she has received your check, I'll notify you that your school has been registered and send a copy of your registration form to the AVSA Shows and Judges Chairman, Bill Foster.

I wish all of you successful and enjoyable judging schools.

Ruth Loomis
Judging School Scheduler

Registration Report

By Joe Bruns

1220 Stratford Lane • Hanover Park, IL 60133
Email: jbruns@qwip.net

name reservation costs $1.00 ($5.00 for non-members) for each plant, and is valid for two years, after which time it may be extended two years for an additional $1.00 ($5.00 for non-members). Registration of the plant is $5.00 ($25.00 for non-members) unless completed within the reservation period, in which case the balance is $4.00 ($20.00 for non-members).

C. Craig Coleman – Greensboro, NC

'Coleman's Queen Nefertiti' (10032) 04/12/2009 (C. Coleman) Semidouble-double pink. **Variegated** medium green, pink, white and gold, serrated/red back. **Standard**

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Sherlene Jones – Jackson, MO

'Wizard's Enchanted Water' (10033) 04/16/2009 (S. Jones) Semidouble-double white wasp/purple eye, green edge. **Variegated** light green and white, plain, serrated/bustle back. **Standard**

'Wizard's Josi Rose' (10034) 04/16/2009 (S. Jones) Semidouble white wasp/purple shading, green edge. **Variegated** light green and white, plain. **Standard**

'Wizard's RiLynn Kay' (10035) 04/16/2009 (S. Jones) Semidouble pink two-tone wasp. **Variegated** medium green and pink, plain, scalloped/red bustle back. **Standard**

'Wizard's Thunderkiss' (10036) 04/16/2009 (S. Jones) Semidouble fuchsia frilled wasp/white edge. Medium green, heart-shaped, ruffled/red back. **Standard**

'Wizard's Zimmy' (10037) 04/16/2009 (S. Jones) Double purple wasp/white edge. **Variegated** medium green and pink, plain, hairy/red back. **Semiminiature**

.....

Vicky VanPatten – Lake Tapps, WA

'Sara Davidson' (10038) 04/20/2009 (V. VanPatten) Single chimera white/purple stripe. Light green, pointed, quilted, glossy. **Standard**

'Van's Whimsy' (10039) 04/20/2009 (V. VanPatten) Single chimera pink star/purple stripe, fantasy. Medium green, pointed. **Standard**

.....

Janet Stromborg – Denmark, WI

'Allegro Diamond Broker' (10040) 04/29/2009 (J. Stromborg) Single-semidouble dark red-violet ruffled pansy/red sparkle overlay, red sparkle frilled edge. Dark green, heart-shaped, quilted, glossy, serrated/red back. **Standard**

'Allegro Highland Holly' (10041) 04/29/2009 (J. Stromborg) Semidouble-double pink ruffled pansy/fuchsia fantasy, fuchsia glitter edge. Dark green, pointed, quilted, hairy, holly, serrated/red back. **Standard**

REGISTRATION CHANGES

The following description has been corrected by the Plant Registration and Master Plant List Committee:

Yesterday's Shadow (9992) Change from **Standard** to **Standard trailer**.

To All AVSA Members: Exciting Changes are Coming in 2010!

Ruth Rumsey, AVM Editor

Your *African Violet Magazine* will soon have a new look. The AVSA Board of Directors has decided to reduce the width and height of the magazine by a small amount, **while doubling the amount of color pages.**

The amount of pages will stay the same, as will the font size - so the text will remain at the current, easily-read size. What we will be losing is the need for fillers, when an article may not fill an entire page. We will have so many more color pages that we'll have room for many more color photos: those of show-winning plants, as well as more articles with color illustrations.

The first issue in this reduced size will be the January/February 2010 AVM. The ensuing months are needed to work out the changes to the production process. Also, your Board of Directors felt that it would be best for a change to come at the beginning of a new year, especially for our members who save their magazines, keeping them in a collection.

Change can be difficult. But this change will:

- save this organization thousands of dollars annually
- reduce the cost of postage
- keep the AVM intact
- keep our dues at the current rate
- double the amount of color pages in each issue.

Fortunately, we have a leadership and Board of Directors dedicated to keeping AVSA strong and dedicated to keeping the *African Violet Magazine* a high quality, informative publication.

Please contact me if you have questions or suggestions. As I have stated often - this is YOUR magazine. I value your input very much.

In Search of New Violets

Dr. Jeff Smith, The Indiana Academy

Ball State University • Muncie, IN 47306
Email: JSmith4@bsu.edu

Over the last few months, a number of questions have come in regarding hybridizing with chimera or pinwheel African violets. Since I've not done a lot of work with chimeras in hybridizing, I posted some questions to the various internet discussion groups asking folks to share their experiences. Some of the replies have been surprising. This column will try to summarize what has been reported and discussed. I hope that others who have hybridizing experience with chimeras will send in their observations for use in future columns.

Q: If I cross a chimera with a chimera, will I get chimera offspring?

A: Although this would seem to be a logical way to produce chimera plants, the mutation that causes chimeras appears to be a change in the tissue organization and structure of the plant, not a change in their cellular DNA. As such, the mutation is not transmitted to offspring through sexual reproduction or asexually through leaf cuttings. The tissue organization change of a chimera can only be transmitted through buds. Buds maintain the tissue structure change of a chimera. This is why chimeras can only be reproduced through suckers or other types of buds such as those on flower stalks.

An analogy in humans to chimeras might be illustrated by a change in the structural organization of your hand where a finger has been damaged and the nail bed of the finger is no longer able to grow a fingernail. This change in your body structure has certainly changed your appearance, but it can't be inherited by your offspring. No change was made in your reproductive DNA that you pass on to offspring.

Having said chimeras don't appear to be inherited through the DNA changes, I have received one or two reports of chimera offspring showing up in seedlings from chimera parents. However, the rate is very low, usually less than 1%. With rates this low, it is difficult to separate a DNA inheritance of chimeras versus a structural change in a seedling that resulted in a chimera. In any event, crossing two chimeras together does not appear to be a good strategy in producing more chimera plants.

Q: If I use a chimera as a parent, which stripe color will be inherited?

A: The reports seem to indicate that the offspring from a chimera inherit the traits of the center stripe more than they do the outer stripe. This is not unexpected as the reproductive tissue of the stamens and pistil are more likely to originate from the same tissue as the center stripe of the petals. Therefore, if the flower has a white outer stripe and blue center stripe, the blue color will be inherited. If the flower has a blue outer stripe and a white center stripe, the white color will most likely be passed on to the offspring. However, since white is recessive to most other colors, the flower color of the other parent will likely dominate in this last case.

Q: I've had trouble getting seed pods to take on my chimera plants. Are chimeras sterile?

A: The responses to this question have been particularly interesting. A number of hybridizers who are successful in making other crosses have reported problems when working with chimeras. The problem is especially evident when the chimera plant is the seed parent. In some cases, the pollination appears to fail and no seed pod develops at all. Some hybridizers reported making a series of crosses all on the same day and all of the crosses taking, except any involving chimeras. In other cases, the seed pod develops, but they are mostly empty. Very few, if any, viable seeds are inside when the seed pod matures. Enough reports came in on this problem that it seems likely that chimeras do have some degree of sterility, especially when used as the seed parent.

It is unclear exactly why chimeras would have a sterility problem Plants are known to have systems that check the compatibility between the pollen and the stigma of the flower. There are genetic mechanisms known in some plants that will prevent the pollen tube from growing towards the egg if the pollen is from a different species or if the pollen donor is too alike genetically to the seed parent. Because chimeras are a mixture of two tissues, perhaps the pollen compatibility mechanism is unable to function properly. It might be difficult to tell if the pollen is the same or different than yourself when you are already a mixture of two tissue types. This could cause all pollen to be rejected and the cross to fail.

Chimeras with green stripes are likely to have the sterility problem further complicated by the presence of the green pigment. It is well known that green flowers often have false pregnancies, setting seed pods but not producing any seed. This is due to the flower parts in green flowers behaving more like leaves than sexual organs. Quite likely, this sterility problem comes into play with the green striped chimeras too, making them essentially useless for hybridizing.

The success using a chimera as a pollen parent was less clear. There were no clear reports of a sterility problem with a chimera pollen parent, but few folks reported making a cross this way. Most hoped to conserve the chimera traits and used

the chimera plant as the seed parent, not as the pollen parent. I would expect less of a problem with sterility with a chimera pollen parent because of the shear numbers of pollen grains produced per plant as compared to eggs. However, data is lacking on the extent of a sterility problem, if any, with a chimera pollen parent.

Q: Does the variegation in a chimera plant affect the ability to use it in hybridizing?

A: The few reports that I've seen on successful hybridizing with a chimera all seemed to be using non-variegated plants. I wouldn't expect variegation to make a difference in the success of a cross using chimeras, but the sample size of the successful crosses makes it too early to tell for sure.

AVSA Building Maintenance Fund

Susan Hapner - *Chairman*
35 Ridge Point Dr.
Chesterfield, MO 63017
5 March 2009 to 31 May 2009

Thumbprint

Hilda Prince
Ralph O. Quaintance
Lynn Milgrom
Wong Wai Sing
Stephanie Jeffrey
Virginia Barthelemy
Judy Walton
North Star AV Council/MN.
Metro St. Louis AV Council/St. Louis
Charles Hart
Wendy Tooker
Cheryl StClair
Doris Acree
Pam Kopec
Robert McMeel
Joshua McKinney
Sylvia Anderson
Joan Wilson
Bonnie Journell
Patricia Miklica
Barbara Lagerway
Francine Magnusson
Joan Paolin
Anne Nicholas
Susan Arnao
Alice Inlow
Donna Becker

Two-tone

Blake Mayfield
Evelyn Boyer
Judith Johnson
Carol Allegretti
Desiree Brugman
Linda Wheaton

Multicolored

AVS of Greater Tulsa/OK
Lakes Area Violet Growers/MN
Kathleen Trunzo

TOTALS $847.91

Boyce Edens Research Fund

Marlene J. Buck
17235 N. 106th Avenue
Sun City, AZ 85373-1958
Donations received from April 1, 2009 - May 31, 2009 • Total = $254.00

Multicolored

Gwen Goodship-Patience, Berkshire, England
In memory of Richard W. Gilbert

Two-tone

Carol Allegretti, Fort Myers, FL
South Coast African Violet Society, Torrance, CA
In memory of Mary Belle Wallenhorst, the last remaining active member of South Coast AVS
Linda M. Wheaton, Houston, TX

Thumbprint

Doris R. Acree, Granbury, TX
Sylvia Anderson, Mesa, AZ
Patricia K. Apgar, Newton, NJ
Alice A. Inlow, Ballwin, MO
Robert McMeel, Houma, LA
Patricia Miklica, San Jose, CA
Parivash Nourjah, Gaithersburg, MD
Joan Paolin, Malden, MA
Victoria African Violet Society, Victoria, TX
Joan K. Wilson, Theresa, WI

Small Talk

By Laurel D. Goretsky

32 Scimitar Point N.W. • Calgary, Alberta, Canada
Email: Laurel@Goretsky.ca

The convention has come and gone for another year. I am already looking forward to seeing everybody again in 2010 in Raleigh, NC. Reno was host to a lovely convention. The ringing of bells in the casino, the snow, and of course, the beauty of the violets in the showroom are still imprinted in my mind.

My love for miniatures and semiminiature trailers is no secret. I was delighted that a miniature trailer was chosen as the best in show. 'Broadway Star Trail' exhibited by Dr. William Price of Vancouver, BC won this year's top honor. As the plant is not listed in First Class, you will have to bear with my description. I believe the blossom is a single white star/purple eye against medium green leaves. The plant, as you will see in the pictures on the website and in the AVM, is an amazing trailer. Bill had many more winnings in the show, but I am just sticking to the miniature and semiminiatures. He had the best AVSA collection of miniatures/semiminiatures with the semiminiature trailers 'Fiery Trail', 'Foxwood Trail', and 'Foster Trail'. 'Fiery Trail' has a single chimera white and red striped star blossom with bright green leaves. The blossoms on 'Foxwood Trail' are single with a variable pink/red center or sometimes a fuchsia-pink/darker pink center. 'Foster Trail' has semidouble fuchsia blossoms against medium green leaves. One other mention on Bill's winnings was that he won Best Vintage Violet with the semiminiature trailer 'Sunset Trail'. You can see how things have changed over the years in the way we list plants in the First Class description of this plant. All that it says for 'Sunset Trail' is 'Single pink. Plain'. The plant was hybridized in 1979. 'Sunset Trail' is definitely an African violet worth keeping around.

Canadian growers had a big presence again this year. Norma Russell from Nepean, ON won the best semiminiature in the show with 'Lyon's June Bug'. This plant has semidouble fuchsia pansy blossoms which look stunning against the variegated green and white foliage. Lorna also had the best miniature in the show with 'Orchard's Bumble Magnet'. This delightful miniature has double pink star blossoms and medium green foliage. It occurred to me that I have seen 'Orchard's Bumble Magnet' listed for awards repeatedly over the years so I looked to the 'Honor Roll of African violets' to find out how it has done in the past. 'Orchard's Bumble Magnet' was on the 'Honor Roll' for 2004 which means that the variety has to be on the 'Best Varieties List' for 5 consecutive years. I think I better add 'Orchard's Bumble Magnet' to my collection!

Another Canadian grower that has done well at AVSA conventions is Beverly Williams from Brooklin, ON. This year Beverly won the 2nd best collection of AVSA miniatures/semiminiatures with the semiminiatures 'Plumberry Glow', 'Von's Small Gift', and 'Ode to Grace'. 'Plumberry Glow' has single white sticktite pansy blossoms with plum patches. The leaves are variegated medium green and cream. This plant is one of the newer varieties that has become a favorite. If you don't already have it, it's worth a try. 'Von's Small Gift' has single mauve two-tone sticktite pansy blossoms with variegated medium green and white foliage. 'Ode to Grace' has a single-semidouble bright pink blossom with a white frilled edge. The leaves are medium green. The collection of these three semiminiatures looked lovely.

A familiar name in my convention reports on miniatures and semiminiatures in the Amateur Horticultural division is Kathy Lahti from Annandale, MN. Kathy had lots to do at the convention, and she travels far, yet she always manages to bring beautiful plants. Kathy won the best Holtkamp Collection with 'Optimara Little Crystal', 'Optimara Rose Quartz', and 'Optimara Little Opal'. 'Optimara Little Crystal' is a miniature with single-semidouble white wasp blossoms. The leaves are medium green. 'Optimara Rose Quartz' has single-semidouble pink blossoms against medium green foliage. 'Optimara Little Opal' has single white bell blossoms with a purple-blue center and light green leaves. Kathy also won the best Robinson Collection with the semiminiatures 'Rob's Strobe Light', 'Rob's Lucky Stroke', and 'Rob's Fuddy Duddy'. 'Rob's Strobe Light' is a chimera with single medium blue pansy and white striped blossoms. The leaves are medium green. 'Rob's Lucky Stroke' has semidouble chimera dark pink and white striped blossoms against medium green foliage. 'Rob's Fuddy Duddy' has blossoms that are semidouble dark mauve-purple sticktite pansy. The leaves are dark green. Both collections exhibited were beautiful.

I have a lot more to tell you about the Commercial division and some plants that really stood out to me in the show and my experience in the commercial salesroom, but you'll have to wait until next time.

Happy growing!

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Plumberry Glow

Exhibited by: ***Kathy Lahti***

Hybridized by: ***Lyon Greenhouses/Sorano***

Semiminiature

Effects of Various Light Intensities on Germination of African Violet Seeds

By Ronn Nadeau
Nadeau African Violet Seeds

History and Objectives

We first reported on African violet seed germination in this magazine more than thirty years ago (Nadeau, AVM, 1978 and 1982). We stopped retail sale of our seeds in 1988 and since then have sold only wholesale. Now, as we resume retail selling using the internet, we are renewing efforts at finding the easiest and most reproducible methods for even green-thumbed-challenged growers to have fun and success while growing African violets from seeds.

Abstract

Experiments were conducted on African violet seeds to test the effects of light intensity on percent germination and time to start of germination, using 40-watt cool white fluorescent tubes. More specifically, we wanted to focus in on results from an earlier experiment in which it had been found that light of relatively higher intensity caused poorer germination than light of slightly lower intensity.

In this study, the light of higher intensity, 12.5 EV (with seeds only 2.5 inches from the tubes), resulted in a poor germination rate and longer time to onset of germination compared to germination results under light of slightly lower intensity (12.0 EV), thereby corroborating our earlier data.

In this study we also learned that relatively dim light (9.0 EV, 28 inches below the tubes), resulted in delayed onset of germination and reduced percent germination. In light of more normal intensities (10.0, 11.0, and 12.0 EV), germination was relatively high.

Light intensities at the germination mix surfaces were controlled by placing the germination pots at certain distances beneath the fluorescent tubes, the distances chosen to correspond to the desired intensities as measured using an incident light meter.

Materials

The African violet seeds were taken from the main batch of Trailer Selection seeds at our company, Nadeau African Violet Seeds. The origin and nature of our seeds is discussed at our website, NadeauAfricanVioletSeeds.com. The germination medium was Fafard Seed Starter Potting Mix, purchased at Lowe's. Pots were 3 1/2 inch square, Kord, no. SQN0350. Plastic sandwich bags used to enclose the germination pots were of the "pleated and close" type, 6.5" x 5.5" x 1".

A single 2-tube 4-foot fluorescent light fixture was used. The tubes were 4-foot Philips Alto 40-watt, cool white, purchased at Home Depot. They were operated on a cycle of 14 hours on, 10 hours off. Light intensities were measured with a Minolta Auto Meter IIIF incident light meter. At various times, Accu-Rite digital thermometer probes (from Lowes) were placed in the germination mixes until the temperatures had equilibrated to determine the temperature the seeds were experiencing. To aid in counting out 100-seed samples, a No. 5 OptiVisor, Donegan Optical Company, was employed.

Methods

Each part of the experiment was conducted in duplicate, –A and –B pots. Fafard Seed Starter Potting Mix was com-

Photo 1. Shows how replicated germination pots were placed on boxes at varyious distances from the fluorescent light tubes, corresponding to light intensities ranging from 9.0 - 12.5 EV. Pots in the back are hidden by pots in the front. (The 11.0 EV tray also contains pots for a different experiment.)

bined with tap water in a ratio of 3:1 (mix:water, vol/vol). Moistened mix was put in 3 1/2 inch pots to within 1/2 inch of the top of the pot. The surface of the mix in each pot was lightly tamped down with a spoon to smooth the surface onto which the seeds would be sown. The Trailer Selection seeds (100 for each pot) were counted out ahead of time and placed in small packets. After all the pots were properly labeled (date, EV, -A or -B) and ready for sowing, 100 seeds were sprinkled over the mix surfaces of each pot, and the pots were enclosed in plastic sandwich bags with the flaps folded under the pots.

The pots were placed directly beneath a fluorescent light fixture at various distances from the bottoms of the tubes such that the "tube to seed" distances resulted in light intensities of 9.0, 10.0, 11.0, 12.0, and 12.5 EV at the seeds. See Photo 1 and Table 1. For reference, sunlight on a clear St. Louis day at noon at the start of summer gave a reading of 15.5 EV, which is 8 times more intense than 12.5 EV light. An article on EV at Wikipedia says that offices and work areas usually have 7 – 8 EV light and home interiors around 5 – 7 EV light.

To determine percent germination values, the counting of newly germinated seedlings began at 10 days after sowing and was repeated at 12, 15, 19, 23, and 33 days after sowing.

Results and Discussion

It has long been known that African violet seeds absolutely will not germinate if the germination pot is kept in the dark. They do germinate well in the presence of medium intensity fluorescent light, so we wondered if they might germinate even better, quicker, and in higher percentage, if the pots were placed close to the fluorescent tubes during the germination period. Therefore, in an earlier experiment we placed some germination pots close to the tubes and, to our surprise, this resulted in very poor germination!

In order to see if this unexpected finding was reproducible, we conducted the experiment reported here. To remove a source of variability, only seeds from our Trailer Selection batch were used, seeds that consistently have yielded a percent germination rate close to 50% under our ordinary test conditions.

The data from this experiment (Table 1) indicate that African violet seeds are sensitive to light intensities of 12.5 EV, causing them to germinate more slowly and at a reduced percent germination rate. This is a puzzling result. We considered the possibility that the close proximity of the seeds to the fluorescent tubes might have caused overheating within the plastic bags holding the germination pots, with subsequent damage to the seeds. However, temperature probes placed near the surface in the germination mixes showed that the temperature was only 2 - 3 degrees Fahrenheit higher in the 12.5 EV pots (poor germination) compared to the 12.0 EV pots (good germination). It seems unlikely that such a small temperature difference could by itself account for this dramatic effect. We will try to figure out the reason through further experimentation.

Germination was also significantly lower in dim 9.0 EV light, 33%, and by the 33rd day after sowing, the dim light seedlings were considerably smaller than the 11.0 EV seedlings. The 10.0 EV seedling size was intermediate between the 9.0 and 11.0 EV seedlings at the 33rd day.

Based on our objective of understanding the conditions that will work best for our customers, the main conclusion is that African violet seed growers can confidently place their germination containers under fluorescent tubes at distances such that the seeds are anywhere from 8 – 15 inches from the tubes. This would especially apply if they use the same kind of fluorescent tubes as were used in this study.

Further Work

African violet seeds are rather persnickety when it comes to the medium upon which they are sown. We have studied ten commercially available seed germination materials and found that only four of them give optimal results. We hope to report our germination mix findings in an upcoming issue of the *African Violet Magazine*.

References

1. Nadeau, Ronn. "Growing African Violets From Seed." *African Violet Magazine* January 1978: 7.
2. Nadeau, Ronn. "Shedding Light on the Secrets of Saintpaulia Seed Germination." *African Violet Magazine* March 1982: 36.

Table 1. Effect of Light Intensity on Time to Onset of Germination and Percent Germination.

Tube to Seed Distance (Inches)	Light Intensity (EV)	Days After Sowing					
		10	12	15	19	23	33
		Percent Germination					
28.0	9.0	0	4	14	20	29	33
18.5	10.0	0	7	17	36	43	50
10.3	11.0	0	7	21	40	50	53
5.0	12.0	0	1	17	36	50	49
2.5	12.5	0	0	2	7	10	16

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Sassy Sadie

Exhibited and Hybridized by: ***Paul Sorano/Lyon Greenhouses***

Semiminiature

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Breaking News

3rd Best New Cultivar/Commercial

2009 AVSA National Show

Exhibited and Hybridized by:

Kent Stork/Kent's Flowers

Standard

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Episcia 'Thad's Red Crocodile'

Exhibited by: ***Leonard Re***

Hybridized by: ***Thad Scaggs***

Guilty as Charged: Managing Your African Violet Addiction

By Mary S. Schaeffer

I had a good chuckle reading Elmer Godney's article. For Beginners in the May issue of *African Violet Magazine*. He talked about the lack of restraint often exhibited by new growers and the consequences of their reckless acquisition of too many violets, too quickly. I confess; I have committed virtually every infraction mentioned by Godeny in his article and then perhaps a few more. Although at one point I did start to despair, I'm too stubborn to give in and found a solution to what looked like an insurmountable amount of repotting and grooming.

Background

Just as Godeny wrote, I put down every leaf, carefully nurtured every sucker, and potted up all those babies. What's more, after separating off a number of babies, I'd carefully add soil to the pot so the mother leaf could go into production a second and perhaps a third time. When I only had a handful of violets this was not a bad thing.

I had violets to share with family and friends and had flowers all winter. Plus, I mailed a few violets to family members with their Christmas presents as a kind of surprise bonus. This was not a bad outcome for someone who had only purchased a dozen or so violets.

Then the lunacy set in. At one point, on a mid-November cloudy day when natural sunlight was at a premium, I mentioned to my sister that I had two big trays with about 100 leaf pots. I said that I was moving them each afternoon from the sunroom to the living room so they could get both morning and afternoon sunlight and probably should have my head examined for doing that. "Oh, that's not *when* you should have sought professional help," was her sardonic response. She was in complete agreement with Godeny.

As I continued to pot up all the babies, you can just imagine what happened. I stood looking around at my collection in mid-January; I was disheartened. The collection had gotten the best of me – it was looking ratty and I had no idea how I would ever find the time or energy to get it back in shape. Then a light went off.

I stood looking around at my collection in mid-January; I was disheartened. The collection had gotten the best of me – it was looking ratty and I had no idea how I would ever find the time or energy to get it back in shape.

The Answer

Yes, many – make that *most* – of my approximately 300 plants needed repotting, and there were leaf pots with babies waiting to be potted up. I could see weekends of grueling work ahead of me, and my plants were *supposed* to be fun. I like repotting and grooming, as long as the amount is reasonable. The "Eureka" moment occurred when I realized I did not have to do it all in one weekend, or two for that matter.

I reasoned that if I repotted ten plants a day I would be finished in less than a month – and ten per day is certainly a reasonable amount. Once I reached that decision, the burden was lifted. Now, you may be thinking that this would mean a lot of wasted effort getting your potting mix and accoutrements out every day. And I would agree – if that were the case.

About the same time I had a conversation with one of the very experienced growers from our local club, Libby Behrnake. She happened to mention that she had temporarily converted her dining room table into a repotting center as she was starting to get her plants ready for our spring show.

So, that's what I did. Since we have an old table in the dining room and really only use it for the holidays, I converted it to my potting center and slowly began working on my plants. I often work from home, and when I need a break from work, I go into the dining room and pot up a few plants. Within a few weeks, my plants were looking better.

The Swapping Tray

Reluctantly I stopped potting up every single baby. Now, I take two or three off each mother leaf and pot them up. I then put momma back in the pot and add some additional soil, if needed. The leaf pot then goes into my trade tray. Once I see the leaf is continuing to produce babies, I add it to my trade list.

I also no longer put down leaves from every single plant I purchase or acquire. Believe me; that was a hard adjustment to make. However, if I am being totally honest, I will own up to sometimes putting down several leaf pots of the same

plant. This usually happens when really good leaves are broken or taken off of a good plant. But, those extra leaf pots go into my trade tray, and are not destined for my permanent collection. Some might not see this last step as controlling my collection, but rather feeding the frenzy. And, they are probably correct. But, at least I now have only one or two of each plant instead of eight or nine.

Many growers take these extra plants to their local shows for trading or sale – or perhaps to just give to friends. This is another solution rather than "wasting" all those extra babies. Now, I just have to make sure I get the dining room table cleaned off in time for Thanksgiving dinner. I'll probably always grow too many violets, but to my way of thinking, that's probably better than not enough.

Tight Crowns and Stunted Growth

By Deanna Stewart

I am an avid reader of the AVM, and although this is certainly not new information, I think it deserves emphasis. For over a year, I struggled with African violets that had tight, brittle crowns and stunted growth. I searched for mites, decreased my lights, adjusted room temperature, and discarded dozens of plants.

I had utilized wick-watering exclusively for years so did not think it was the fertilizer. However, after reducing both my fertilizer and algicide to half of the recommended strength, I now have thriving, beautiful new African violets. Perhaps a change in brand of potting mix contributed to the problem. Still, it remains a puzzle to me why this did not happen previously, but I am now a believer that regular doses of fertilizer used in wick-watering tubs is very toxic. Other members who may have similar experiences may want to proactively reduce amounts of fertilizer in water for wick-watering.

YOU HAVE NEW MEMBERS! NOW WHAT?

By Kathy Bell
Membership & Promotion Committee

Some of you have been getting New Member information from Sylvia Leeds, member of the AVSA Membership and Promotion Committee, and I *know* that you have contacted them, right? They joined your local group from newspaper ads, shows, and word of mouth. And now, they're interested in joining AVSA! Good job!

So, how do we keep them and get them involved? One very successful project is a Mentor Program.

This has been a great tool for my local club. When someone joins our club, one of the first things we do is pair them with a mentor. A mentor has knowledge and experience in growing African violets and is willing to spend time with the new member. If possible, a mentor may live close to the person they will be mentoring. They will contact the new member shortly after they join, welcome them to the club, offer hands-on help, and answer violet questions.

Sometimes new members are hesitant, not wanting to be a bother, and need reassurance that you are happy to help them and others become good growers. I always tell them, "Please! Bother me!"

We encourage our mentors to go to the new member's house, see their growing set up - and give them helpful suggestions and information to help them grow beautiful violets. After all, if a new member cannot grow beautiful African violets, they will lose interest, and your club will never see them again.

A mentor gives the new member a chance to ask questions one-on-one and to ask those questions they might have been uncomfortable to ask at the club meeting. They may look forward to the meetings if they know someone there, and you may even make a new friend!

In my club, a new member is mentored for two years, which also makes them eligible to enter our shows as a novice for two years.

There are several mentors in my club, and they are happy to help any of the members in the club, whether they are new or not. Most mentors have more than one person they mentor - right now I have five!

I am proud to say that the last two people I have mentored have won Best In Show! They were thrilled and so was I! They are now giving programs at our meetings, and I hope they will become mentors in the near future.

We always need mentors and members to take on some of the duties of the club meetings and shows. I have found that if they feel as though they belong, they will be happy to help and get involved.

I do hope your club will try a Mentor Program, and see if it doesn't help your membership.

We all need to be more active in our clubs to keep them going and growing!

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Milky Way Trail

Exhibited by: ***Hans Inpijn***

Hybridized by: ***J. Stahl***

Semiminiature Trailer

Shows and Judges

Bill Foster, Shows and Judges Committee

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The convention in Reno was great! Lynn Lombard, Barbara Elkin, and all their committee people should be commended for a fine job. We also need to thank our members who brought their entries to present a beautiful show and the commercial members for the nice selection of plants they brought for us to bring home with us.

Just in case you missed the announcement in the last issue of the *African Violet Magazine*, Paul Sorano will be sponsoring a new amateur collection beginning with the 2010 AVSA Convention. The collection will be **Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses Collection**. Any plants registered by Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses will be eligible for this class. The same basic rules will apply as used for the other special collections. Paul is offering an award of $200 for the best collection and $100 for the second best collection. You have plenty of time to get your collection ready for the next AVSA Convention.

The following judges will attain the status of Master Judges in 2009: **Winston Goretsky** and **Irene Henry**, Canada, **Janet Tyler**, Iowa, **Kathy Lahti**, Minnesota (Kathy actually earned this honor in 2008), **Joyce Stork**, Nebraska, **Edna McCauley** and **Patricia Sutton**, Oklahoma, **Ann Shirley**, Tennessee, and **Ruth Goeke**, Texas. Congratulations to all of you for your many years of dedication.

Elinor Skelton, who has served on the Shows & Judges Committee for many years as Judging School Registrar has decided to retire. Thanks, Elinor, for the many years of outstanding service. We will miss you. **Ruth Loomis** will be assuming the duties of registering your schools. You will find Ruth's address on the inside cover of the AVM. Register your schools early. **Ruth will accept requests for school registrations by e-mail.**

Here is a rule change: Page 39, third paragraph under **Classification Committee** should be replaced with the following paragraph: Any variety or cultivar that is listed in the Master Variety List or hybridizer's list as ***variable***, such as a double white with an occasional touch of pink or green, should be entered in the multicolor class if it is showing the touch of pink or green. A blossom described as blue with a variable white, or any edge, should be entered in the edged class if an edge is present. To assist the judges, the classification committee should add "Variable" in parentheses under the variety name on the entry tag.

This has been discussed frequently, and both amateur and commercial members agreed that it was time for a change.

Page 47, at the end of the paragraph beginning with **Best-in-Show**, add (Shows with an award for Best Standard, please note that this award should be selected from the standard cultivars; Best Species **should not be considered** for this award).

Judges Breakfast, as usual, was a lively meeting. Here are some of the questions and discussions:

In a recent local AVSA show, a judge (who is also a teacher) would not judge an underwater arrangement because the water had a yellowish tint. Should it have been eliminated from consideration?

No, page 70 in the Handbook states that points may be deducted for cloudy or murky water, but the entry should have been judged.

Is it possible for an African violet in an unusual container to be Best-in Show?

Yes, but the entry being considered should be re-judged using the scale of points used for other specimen plants. The relation to the container would not be considered.

If a plant has a chimera leaf, in what class should it be entered?

It should be entered in the proper variegated foliage class.

Why can't we have special guidelines for judging the wasp plants in the Judges' Handbook?

We don't need special guidelines. The wasp plants are judged by the same scale of points as the other specimen plants. Judges should be familiar with this type of plant. Also, a class may be added to the show schedule for wasp plants.

Please speak again to the fact that the highest scoring plant in the show is Best-in-Show, even if judged by more than one panel.

The highest scoring plant in the show is, indeed, supposed to be Best-in-Show. Members have complained that some judges vote on Best-in-Show and ignore the scores on plants in collections. It has also been reported that the final panel selects a plant with a lower score. Judges should always respect the point-scoring of another panel. It is disrespectful to re-judge another panel's work. The Judges' chair or the Show chair may question this if they are aware of it before the judges leave. Judges who refuse to adhere to the rules set forth in the Handbook may have their certificates revoked. This question comes up quite often.

May the container shape for underwater arrangements be stated in the schedule?

Yes, in fact, many schedules do state container size for these classes.

The column is getting lengthy. I will talk to you again in January. Good luck with your fall shows and have a wonderful holiday season.

For Beginners

By Elmer Godeny

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Email: ekgprof@eatel.net

Boy.... is it HOT!!!

As I write this column, it is a beautiful July day in Louisiana. The sun is shining, and there isn't a cloud in the sky. In fact, we haven't seen many clouds in the sky lately. We haven't had a drop of rain in over four weeks! The temperatures have been in the upper 90's with a heat index in the triple digits for the past few weeks. My lawn, which should be a beautiful green, is an orangey-brown, and what is left of the grass crunches under my feet. Cracks are beginning to develop in the soil. I won't even mention what is going on in everyone's flowerbeds (I think you get the idea!). Needless to say, South Louisiana is currently going through a drought. We need rain badly! Please send some our way! Hopefully, by the time this column is published, we will have had some rain.

Now, you may ask yourself, "Why is he describing the weather in Louisiana in a column in the *African Violet Magazine*? What does this have to do with African violets? Aren't African violets indoor plants?"

The weather outside has a lot of influence on your indoor plants, especially your African violets. If you don't believe me, check your plant in the fall and winter. Even though I grow my African violet plants indoors, their growth slows in the colder months as compared to the warmer months. Leaves do not propagate as quickly in the winter as they do in the summer. Notice how your indoor African violet plants seem to come alive with increased vigor in the spring months as the weather begins to warm. This is why the vast majority of African violet shows and sales in the United States are in the spring and early summer months.

As a biologist, I would like to know why this phenomenon occurs. My plants are grown under timed-lights with the window blinds drawn, so it is not because of increased lighting. My house is kept at a pretty constant temperature year-round, using either heating or air conditioning, so there isn't much of a temperature difference throughout the year. Lastly, I wick water my plants. The containers of fertilizer water keep the humidity in my growing room pretty constant year round (I have humidity meters in my growing room). So how do these indoor plants know what is going on outside?

But, back to the point of this column, I was talking about the dry, hot weather we are having in South Louisiana this summer. My goal of this column is to discuss ideas to keep your plants happy without breaking your bank account in the hot summer months.

Before we begin, we need to determine from where the heat in our growing room(s) is coming. I can name two sources of heat: (1) the outside temperatures and (2) electronic equipment within the growing room, including, but not limited to, the lights and fans. Let's cover ways to eliminate heat from these sources separately.

There is little you can do to eliminate heat from outdoor sources. Air conditioning can decrease the temperatures in your home and in your growing area(s), but in the very hot weather, air conditioning can make your electric bills skyrocket. One way to decrease your electric bill is to raise the air conditioning temperature a degree or two. You really won't notice the difference, and the cash savings are impressive.

Another good way to reduce the temperature in your growing area(s) is to close the blinds or shades on the window, if one is present. An outside awning would also do the trick. The purpose of these methods is to reduce direct sunlight from entering and heating your room.

Electronic equipment in your growing area is also important in the temperature around your African violets, perhaps more important than the outside temperature which is mainly cooled by air conditioning. The ballasts in the light fixtures of the growing carts give off a lot of heat. Place your hand on one that has been on for a few hours and feel the heat. Multiply the heat by the number of light fixtures in your room. This greatly increases the temperature around your plants because the light fixtures are so close to the plants. One way to reduce the heat given off by the ballasts is to replace the old ballasts with new electronic, low-heat ballasts. Replacing ballasts is not difficult; it requires about ten minutes of your time, a screwdriver, and a small pair of wire cutters.

Another way to reduce the temperature around your African violets is to stagger the timing of the light fixtures so they are not all on and producing heat at one time. Try not to have the lights on during the hottest part of the day. You may even want to have your lights come on at night or early morning when the temperature is coolest outside. Reducing the length of the time the lights are on each day also reduces the heat output. However, in order to bloom, African violets will require at least ten hours of light.

Placing fans around your African violet growing area(s) can really decrease temperatures. The fans circulate the air,

mixing the warm air with the cool air, thus reducing the room temperature. A second benefit of circulating the air with fans is that it reduces the likelihood of powdery mildew on the foliage. I have four oscillating fans on the floor of my growing room, placed between each of my growing carts. I point the fans about two-thirds up towards the ceiling and away from the growing carts toward the doorway. This circulates the air toward the ceiling and out of the room, allowing fresh, cooler air from the house to enter. I keep my ceiling fan on, pushing the air down towards the floor. Air circulation is very important in lowering the temperature in your growing area(s).

Growing African violets in the heat of summer is not difficult as judged by the fact that many excellent growers live in the south. However, it does take some special planning so your hobby doesn't make you file bankruptcy. Remember that African violets grow best under conditions that are comfortable for you, i.e., temperatures, humidity, no drafts, etc. For best growth, reduce the temperatures in your growing area(s) so your plants are happy. If your plants are happy, you will be happy with the results.

THE AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY OF AMERICA, INC.
STATEMENTS OF ASSETS, LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS – MODIFIED CASH BASIS
DECEMBER 31, 2008 AND 2007

ASSETS

	2008	2007
CURRENT ASSETS:		
Cash and cash equivalents	$ 44,964	$ 63,277
Investments (note 2)	127,817	121,760
Inventory	22,074	16,752
Prepaid expenses	5,699	8,762
Total current assets	200,554	210,551
PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT, net of accumulated depreciation of $156,229 and $150,552 (note 4)	70,275	71,969
OTHER ASSETS:		
Reorganization costs net of accumulated amortization of $4,880 and $4,880 (note 6)	-	-
PERMANENT RESTRICTED ASSETS:		
Investments (notes 2 and 5)	81,977	67,729
Total permanently restricted assets	81,977	67,729
Total assets	$352,806	$350,249

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

	2008	2007
CURRENT LIABILITIES:		
Payroll and sales tax liabilities	$ 1,365	$ 1,417
Deferred advertising income (notes 1 and 3)	896	2,022
Deferred membership fees (note 1)	65,888	67,244
Deferred life memberships (note 5)	110,925	111,250
Deferred income, future conventions	2,135	2,135
Deferred revenue - other (note 1)	5,005	4,188
Total current liabilities	186,214	188,256
NEW ASSETS:		
Unrestricted:		
Operating	(44,532)	(31,510)
Board designated - Convention	8,928	8,391
Board designated - Boyce Edens	48,468	43,938
Board designated - Hudson Awards	1,476	1,476
Property and Equipment	70,275	71,969
Total unrestricted net assets	84,615	94,264
Permanently restricted	81,977	67,729
Total net assets	166,592	161,993
Total liabilities and net assets	$352,806	$350,249

Reclassification of the Species

We are in the process of revising the section of the Handbook that covers *Saintpaulia* species. When our revisions are complete, Paul Kroll will submit the revision to be published in the *African Violet Magazine*. Until this project is completed, please refer to First Class for information on the reclassification of the species.

Bill Foster, Shows & Judges' Chairman

Question Box

By Ralph Robinson

P.O. Box 9 • Naples, NY 14512
Email: robsviolet@aolcom

As is always the case, we are far too busy to reply to mail (or e-mail), though we do read all of it. Should you want a personal reply, we are more than willing to answer phone calls made during our normal business hours (12-5 pm EST), since we can work and talk at the same time. For those with access to the Internet, we can be reached at robsviolet@aol.com or via our web-site at www.violetbarn.com. The web-site also contains a wealth of information (and answers to many of your questions).

Question: My violet seems to have a problem I'm hoping you can help me identify. There appears to be a white powdery stuff on the leaves and on the stems of the blossoms. What is this, and what can I do to get the plant healthy again?

Answer: The "powdery stuff" you see is appropriately known as "powdery mildew." It is a very common problem on violets, but it's rarely lethal and will do little lasting damage beyond perhaps marring the plant's foliage, and being unsightly while it's on the plant. Mildew is in the air at all times; we just happen to notice it when conditions are conducive to it appearing on our plants. This usually means cool night temperatures, stagnant air about the plant, and to a lesser extent, higher humidity.

The best strategy is to make the environment less accommodating for mildew. Improving air circulation is a good place to start, since doing this will also tend to moderate temperatures within your growing area. If your plants are overcrowded, give them some space to "breathe." If leaves from neighboring plants are touching (or overlapping), move them far enough apart so that no leaves touch and air has a chance to move about the plants once given their "own space", you'll notice violets have a better shape and look nicer. Adding a small fan in your growing area can help, too. You needn't blow air at the plants, just gently circulate the air in the room.

As for treatments, you can try one or more of the following: 1) gently wash the plant using a mild dish soap and room temperature water, 2) apply a small amount of powdered sulfur to the plant (found at your local pharmacy for a few dollars), then immediately remove with soft-bristled brush, or 3) spray with Neem oil, if you have a larger number of plants that need to be treated. All are non-chemical, non-toxic treatments that are effective and can be done safely in the home. Mildew on blossoms is too difficult to treat without damaging the blossoms, so it's best to simply remove blossoms that have already been affected.

Question: Thanks so much for sending my violets. I'm wondering how you water your violets. The soil comes all the way up to the pot rim and the potting material tends to make the water bead up rather than sink in right away. At the same time, I am trying like heck not to get any water on the leaves. What's your trick?

Answer: We're pretty fussy about the level and firmness of the soil - plants ship better that way and as for violets, they certainly look better this way. We water both from the top and from the bottom, depending upon the age and kind of plant. When they're young, we usually top water. As they mature, and have a more developed root system, they are better able to process larger amounts of water, so we'll bottom water. We do this either by pouring a measured amount of water into a tray holding many plants, or by placing plants on acrylic matting (blankets) that can be made wet when needed. Top watering is always the best means since it allows you more control over how much water you are providing each plant. Unfortunately, it's also the most time consuming (and for us, costly), which is a concern when you grow a very large number of plants.

As for getting the leaves wet, this is made out to be more of a problem than it actually is. After all, doesn't "mother nature" water her plants this way - from the top? Getting the leaves wet only poses a problem when they stay wet, and when the temperature of the water is significantly different than the leaf. The resulting marking on the leaves is a consequence of the temperature difference, not the water itself. This means using room temperature water for your plants. It should feel just slightly cool to your touch. Remember, your body temperature is much higher than that in the room! It also means keeping plants with wet leaves out of direct sun or cold drafts.

Finally, about the water "beading" atop the soil. Like many growers, we use a "soilless" mix, made up entirely of peat, vermiculite, and perlite. Our mix has a small amount of a "wetting" agent that makes absorbing water easier. Over time, though, this breaks down and/or is leached from the soil. Also, though peat moss is a very absorbent material (making it a great material for potting mixes), it also can become very difficult to "re-wet" once it becomes completely dry, or nearly so. To avoid this, don't let your soil mix go completely dry, to the point where it begins to shrink and separate from the pot sides. Water when the soil surface is just "dry to the touch," but not yet "crispy" dry. If it is dry, and doesn't absorb water readily, try one or more of the following. Pre-moisten the soil surface, water lightly, give it some time to absorb, then come back later and water more

thoroughly. You can also try "roughing up" the soil surface with your fingertip. Over time, the soil surface can become hard and smooth, so breaking this up gives the water places to make its way into the soil. Lastly, you can try this trick. Adding a "wetting agent" to the water. Soap works well for this purpose. Adding a few drops of mild dish detergent to your watering can often works wonders. Don't get carried away though, since you don't want too much of this accumulating around the root system over time.

Question: I've noticed that when repotting, you will remove a lot of the plant's leaves as well as roots. Do I need to do this, and if so, how can I tell how much of each to remove?

Answer: There's no need to do this, especially when potting into a larger size pot. When repotting into the same size pot, however, there are benefits. Though not necessary, by pruning the plant and roots back, we're giving the plant a "fresh start," so to speak. Our intention in repotting is to encourage new, healthy, growth, not necessarily save old growth. It also means we can go a longer time before having to repot again!

We'll usually prune the plant down to the center (youngest) four to six leaves, and the root ball to a third to a half of its original size when repotting into the same size pot. There's no need to be this extreme, though. An attractive, blooming plant can keep its appearance after repotting with only minimal pruning of leaves and roots - removing just enough of both to allow any "neck" to be buried and for the exchange of old soil for new to encourage new root growth. A rough "rule of thumb" would be to remove approximately equal proportions of foliage and root, since a smaller root system is able to support less of a plant. Minor pruning of foliage allows for only minor pruning of the root ball, while extensive pruning of the plant requires more extensive pruning of the roots.

Question: I have a number of violets in my collection. All of them are doing great except one. I have tried everything I know to encourage its growth. It was planted and watered exactly the same as the others. Why?

Answer: We've paraphrased this particular person's question - it's actually a few related questions, and something we'll hear from growers often. To begin, it's important to remember that your violets are living organisms and, like other living things you are familiar with (you, your family, your pets, etc.), each will respond differently to their environment and what they are provided. Though their general needs might be the same, there will be differences from plant to plant - there are always exceptions. Caring for all plants the same may be just the wrong thing to do for these exceptional plants.

One example that springs to mind is one of our miniature varieties, 'Rob's Rinky Dink'. In most every way, it's a very nice variety. It grows and shapes well, and blooms heavily and often. But you cannot grow it well if you treat it the same as others. This is a variety that demands far less water than others. It abhors being wet and will shed one or two rotting leaves every time it's watered improperly or excessively. Being a commercial grower, this is a problem, since we need to be able to water large numbers of plants at the same time, as efficiently as possible. A solution? Water on the same schedule, but pot this variety in a lighter, more porous, soil mix (add more perlite to the mix, for example). Or, do this. Since we "mat water" most of our violets, we'll place varieties like this one off of the mat on the edge of the shelves, so it doesn't stand on a wet mat and has access to less water. We could give examples of other varieties that like more or less light, fertilizer, heat or cold, and so on. You get the point. We can give our plants the same general care, but recognize their special needs and make the appropriate accommodations.

Question: I am going to use violets you are sending me as table favors at a party. They come in plastic pots, but I like the appearance of terra cotta, so am thinking of repotting them. If this isn't possible, I'd like to wrap the pots in decorative foil or paper. Any advice?

Answer: Again, a question paraphrased from comments of a number of our customers. The last thing you want to do as you're preparing an event is repot small flowering plants! It's messy, time consuming, and unless you're really careful (and experienced), likely to damage the plants. Since appearance is what's most important here, it's simpler just to place the potted plant into a pot of the same size but desired appearance. Find a terra cotta pot only very slightly larger than the pot the plant is currently in. Then "slip" the terra cotta pot over the outside of the plastic pot you're hiding. It will have the same appearance without the problems of repotting.

As for decorating with foil or paper, we suggest doing the following. Assuming the wrapping material used can retain a shape, wrap an empty pot of the same size used for the potted plant, using it as a "mold." Make as many decorative coverings as needed, then slip the potted plants into them just prior to the event. One last thing. If plants are overly wet, tape over the drainage holes or insert a small piece of plastic inside the outer pot or wrapper. This will keep the plants from "bleeding" water onto the table cloth in front of your guests!

'Rhapsodie Sophia': To Hell and Back

By Linda D. Garramone

Many years ago, I was shopping my local garden center and walked past a stand of trays containing many African violets. One in particular caught my eye. It was a rose pink violet. The container held a plant variety indicator noting the name 'Rhapsodie Sophia.' I don't know why the name stuck with me. I had bought plants, and after losing the indicator, never could remember their names. I had just been through an infestation that devastated my plant collection and was looking to rebuild. After that, my new plants survived my attempts at figuring out lighting, potting mixtures, container preferences, and watering issues, etc. They intrepidly endured the dog knocking over my plant stand and several instances of being at ground zero for rambunctious bouts of kitty tag.

In October 2006, I read the Most Wanted variety list in *African Violet Magazine* a request for 'Rhapsodie Sophia.' I was happy to contact Barbara Elkin and advised her that I had Sophia and would be happy to share. Linda of San Diego, CA, was put in touch with me, and I promised her that I would start a plantlet and send it to her. I had sent her a photograph of Sophia, and she had remarked how healthy it looked. I was thrilled at the opportunity to assist someone in finding a rare variety.

The thrill of helping a fellow violet fancier did not last long. I started to notice that an outer leaf was turning brown. I plucked it off and started what I thought was a healthy looking leaf. My leaf did not take, and more outer leaves, very slowly one by one, turned brown and wilted. With a growing sense of urgency, I contacted local violet society experts, Bill and Katharine Paauwe. They were leaving for a trip, but Bill most graciously agreed to spare me a moment and examine my specimen. He quickly surmised an infestation of some sort, recommended spraying the plants with Neem oil, and generously provided some. I followed instructions, my plants responded, and the leaves stayed green. Ominously, several weeks later, the browning leaves returned. I bought Physan 20 in the next salvo in the battle against the browning leaves. As I read the directions for the product, the instructions seemed to all but indicate the use of a hazmat suit. Another call to ever patient Bill calmed me and I fired away at the cursed brown scourge.

Why were my plants failing? When we speak of "root rot" just exactly what is it? This was not only a matter of curiosity, but quite literally life and death. Through *African Violet Magazine* I contacted Sue Haffner and Dr. Jeff Smith, who charitably provided information and encouragement in deciphering the problem and providing methods to get the leaves to root. I also contacted the county cooperative to see if they could diagnose the problem with an actual plant sample in their hands. I needed to know exactly what I was fighting in order to have the proper arsenal to launch against it. The results were frustratingly inclusive.

While researching the local county cooperative, I learned about the plant pathology department at Cornell University. So on to Cornell went the next sample in January 2007. Karen L. Snover, Director of the Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic, and Sandra Jensen Tracy, Plant Disease Diagnostician of the Department of Plant Pathology at Cornell University, worked with me to solve this riddle. Their first tests were similarly inclusive with the results being atypical of common pathogens. They asked my permission to test further, but virus and mite testing produced no culprits. Relentlessly, they continued testing and found a bacterial as well as fungal infection, specifically *Erwinia chrysanthemi* (soft rot) and *Cylindrocarpon sp./spp*. A grim prognosis was given and the continued use of Physan 20 recommended as the only registered pesticide in New York State law approved for combating *Cylindrocarpon*.

I prepared a solution of 3/4 tablespoon of Physan 20 to a gallon of water. I dunked each plant in the bath and held each plant under the surface for ten minutes while chatting on the phone to a friend. I used the same mixture to water my plants, treating systemically, thereby battling this unseen foe inside and out. I immediately lost one plant, but the others survived. The leaves stopped browning. The initial new plant growth was comprised of twilight zone twisted and deformed leaves. Following that, however, further new growth appeared and looked strong and healthy. A couple of plants produced numerous new crowns. Best of all, 'Rhapsodie Sophia' was producing healthy leaves again. Maybe a rooting of a leaf was going to possible.

AND THEN... I noticed that Sophia's development was a bit slower than the rest of my collection. The other plants had even produced blossoms, yet maddeningly, only Sophia was not recovering with the same vigor. I decided to look at what was not so obvious, the root system. The neck below the surface was for all intents and purposes a gooey mush with only about 1/2-inch of the plant neck being salvageable. Sophia had also developed two crowns. One was already becoming black at its base. I then planted the rootless second crown and one healthy looking leaf in potting mix and placed them in plastic bags. The leaf failed, and the crown still showed no new roots. In a last ditch effort, I separated the crown's five leaves and put each of them in water, knowing this would produce "water roots" and not proper plant roots. Three leaves quickly failed. The last two leaves, one picture perfect and the other resembling a bent-eared puppy, survived. They both started to show root growth. The perfect one started to brown on its edges. I tried to trim the brown

and see if the leaf would continue to survive, but in quick order it showed that it was not to be.

The bent-eared puppy leaf kept on growing roots. I transferred it to potting medium and placed it inside a plastic baggie. It continued to thrive. Now I waited in unbearable anticipation for several more weeks. Then I noticed a small greenish object in the potting medium. Could this be a plantlet pushing through or just moss or algae? I watched interminably for this presence to make its true self known. I was constantly checking on it, popping in to check its progress like a bizarre cuckoo clock. After what seemed an eternity, my moment arrived. I was able to determine that the green substance I spotted was indeed a plantlet springing forth as new life amid catastrophic devastation. The immense thrill and relief of that moment cannot be adequately described. The most important aspect of this was it meant I was hopefully going to be able to keep my word.

I watched the young plantlet and a sister plant grow forth. The mother leaf started to brown and I removed the mother leaf probably far too early, but there was no other option. One young Sophia looked picture perfect and her sister looked to be the bent-eared puppy spitting image of her mother. Sophia and her sister grew, but with alarming lethargy. Finally in January 2008, I informed Linda that I would ship Sophia to her when the weather was warm enough to sustain her transport. In March, I contacted her again to work out when she would be home so Sophia would not fall prey to theft or other mischief. Tragically, I received the news that there was a death in her family, and that I should wait for a better time to finally send Sophia to her. In April, Linda asked for me to send Sophia as a source of consolation. I rapidly made arrangements. I was encouraged with the news that Sophia safely arrived and was doing well, and further updates have been greatly rewarding.

I am sure that at the onset, almost anyone else would have given up on this project and told Linda that the plant failed and died, so sorry. At one time, I may have been one of them, but I have been taking martial arts classes. I firmly believe that I have benefited through these arts to pursue insurmountable challenges. Though no one would guess that I would apply the mindset that I have acquired there to battling a plant that was as focused on dying as I was keeping her alive. Some may take issue with my methods not being in keeping with proper propagating or growing procedures. As Dr. Bill Cosby once said, "in a moment of desperation, an intelligent person will give the ridiculous a try." I was not only desperate, but in the zone of being goal-oriented, and nothing was going to stop me, period, from achieving my desired objective. I am if nothing else, tenacious (ok, I'm stubborn and hard-headed, but there is no quit in me). The rule book of proper procedures was not taking me where I needed to go, so I went on without it and devised my own path with the result: Mission accomplished.

Recently, I attended the Sweet Water AVS plant show in West Sayville, NY. A friend of mine saw a couple of plants at the sales table that she really wanted, but could not afford all of them. I bought one of the plants and told her that I would start a leaf for her. After all, growing violets is easy.

AVSA DONATION FUND LEVELS

- Thumbprint (Under $25)
- Two-tone ($25-$49)
- Multicolor ($50-$99)
- Geneva ($100-$499)
- Fantasy ($500-$999)
- Chimera (Over $1000)

WHAT IS WRONG WITH MY PLANT?

By Sue Gardner

"My plant is leaning to one side. What can I do?"

The usual reason why plants lean to one side is because they are stretching toward a light source. The light coming though a window is stronger than light within a room. Plants need light to grow and flower, so they lean toward the strongest light source. Plants grown on a windowsill naturally lean toward the window. Always turn your plants every few days. Some growers turn the plants by 90° at a time. This means four turns expose all sides of the plant to the strong light. If you do this, you will find your plants will grow evenly and do not lean.

If you grow under fluorescent light, you will find that plants grown on the end of a shelf, or on the outer ends, will also lean toward the strongest light from the tubes. You will have to turn these plants to maintain even growth and prevent leaning. Plants grown directly under the center of the tubes do not lean.

Another reason why plants grow or lean to one side is because they leaned to one side when repotted. Plantlets often do not have enough roots to support them in an upright position. If they are allowed to lean to one side they often grow that way for a period of time. A knob of stem tissue forms on the other side causing some leaning to continue throughout the life of the plant. Sometimes you can correct the lean when repotting, but the plant usually seems to have greater leaf growth on one side during its life. To prevent this, support weak plants with stakes or hairpins in an upright position until they are strong enough to support themselves.

Some plants seem to be genetically programmed to grow sideways. I have had a few hybrids and species that do this. Despite turning many times or even if they are grown directly under fluorescent light tubes, they still lean to one side. You have to live with this if you love the plant. Otherwise, only grow the ones that do not lean!

From the *Newsletter* of the
Early Morn AV Group, Australia

WHAT IS IN YOUR TOOLBOX?

By Marge Huntley

At a recent meeting, three of our experienced growers showed us what they kept in their tool boxes. The containers were much the same, plastic, with two or three compartments and a carrying handle, and easily found.

- A small towel - Handy for cleaning.
- A tray to repot on - (Of course, I had to put in my bit about individual sheets of newspaper helping to stop the spread of "nasties").
- A small tile - To roll yarn on before cutting into wicks which are then soaked in water with a drop of detergent. The detergent removes the dressing from the yarn and makes it a better conveyer of water.
- Tweezers - For getting in where fingers cannot.
- Spoons - In different sizes for handling mix when repotting.
- Cotton wool - To wrap cut stem ends of leaves being taken to club meetings for sale.
- White electricians' tape - For labeling pots with plant names. Can be moved to next pot size when potting up. Don't forget the date on a separate piece!
- Skewer - To remove plant from pot.
- Syringe - To measure liquid fertilizer.
- Brushes - To clean leaves and pot after repotting.
- Blades and knives - For cutting stems. When a large plant needs to have the root ball reduced, the bottom can be cut off with a sharp knife.
- Tooth picks, straws, hairpins - For retaining a leaf which must be moved to improve symmetry of plant.
- Magnifying glass - For close inspection when looking for potential trouble.
- Sucker plucker - This handy tool has a pointy end for cutting and a scoop end which is great for removal of suckers or side shoots of plants. (Careful, it bites. Put a piece of cork over the ends when not in use.)
- Scissors - What do you think?
- Wipes - To clean up leaves, or suck up water drops on leaves.
- Spray bottles - Use with hot water to spray around plants to improve humidity on hot days.
- A jar - To clean tools, such as Sucker plucker, blades, and tweezers.
- The best tools of all are your clever eyes and useful hands. Use them well and you will succeed!

From the *Newsletter* of the
Early Morn AV Group, Australia

A Family Portrait

By Georgene Albrecht

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hirita sinensis (chu REE ta) is known for the glorious patterns on the foliage. Someone recently asked me which "other" gesneriad was the easiest to grow. After eliminating *Streptocarpus, Episcia,* and *Sinningia*, the conclusion became some *Chirita* because they are very tolerant of inconsistent watering and require a minimum of fertilizing and repotting, *C. sinensis* is my choice. As long as bright, indirect light is available about 10 hours a day, they grow well. Normal home temperatures seem to be fine, but they can tolerate cooler temps if necessary. This is why I place them on my lower shelves in the light garden.

The family is very diverse in cultural needs. The popular hybrids of today are the flat rosette types. Most have lavender, bell-shaped, pendulous blooms. Many are available from our AVM advertisers. Look for them.

All the varieties and species of the rosette forms of *Chirita* that I have grown seem to have thick, succulent-like foliage. They can store moisture; this is a big clue not to overwater or over-pot them. The fibrous roots seem tolerant of fertilizer salts and dryness. In fact, they seem to love being in the same smelly, small pots for many months. The only times my chiritas have died is when they were repotted. Keep them in small pots and never allow them to stand in water. Top watering seems to be best. But, some people wick water. Who knows? Whatever works for you in your growing conditions.

If you have a *Chirita* that grows a "trunk" just like our violets do, try cutting the bottom third of the soil ball away and scrape some of the lower "trunk" to encourage roots when replanting lower in the same size pot. The pot should never be more than one-third the width of the *Chirita.* I never remove leaves that are healthy. If lower leaves start to decline and yellow, it's a sure sign they are sacrificing lower leaves to make new ones or blooms. Repot and give a little more light to see of that rejuvenates the plant.

Chirita sinensis

Reproduction for most is either by seed, crown cutting, or leaf. I put my leaf down just like an African violet, sometimes taking a small amount of the "trunk" attached to the leaf stem to insert in the rooting medium. Use a very light, sphagnum medium to root them. That medium should have some builder's sand added to the rooting mix. Rooting hormone is never necessary; in fact, it may damage tissue. Place the cutting in a container or plastic bag and water sparingly, making sure no water is on the cutting. Dry it with a paper towel. Poke a couple of holes in the plastic bag to allow a little air flow.

The foliage on chiritas can be so spectacular. The one tiny *Chirita* with plain foliage that blooms the most for me is *Chirita tamiana.* Every collection MUST HAVE this precious plant.

THE FORTUNATE ACCIDENT

By Don Geiss

The beautiful chimera, 'Monique,' finally went out of flower, and it was ready for surgery to reproduce it.

By surgery, I mean that the core, or tiny top leaves and a section of the roots and stem, were going to be removed as a way to duplicate the plant. It is one of the ways to ensure that the new plants will have a flower that resembles those of the mother plant. Leaf propagation is not successful with chimeras.

The surgery would allow me to replant the core piece that had been removed although few, if any, roots would accompany it. The spot in the center that was opened up by the coring, would at some future date yield baby plants that would all bloom true to the original 'Monique' - white with blue stripe.

Once I started the operation something went horribly wrong. As the exacta knife was drawn around the plant one side of it fell away from the main body. There was no way a circular core could be removed.

Once I started the operation, something went horribly wrong. As the exacta knife was drawn around the plant, one side of it fell away from the main body. There was no way a circular core could be removed. Now, there were two halves of the plant! Perhaps then, I thought, by planting the broken half, but leaving a little bit of the raw core exposed, baby plants might grow out in a similar fashion to my original plan.

I also thought if that works, the other, larger half of the plant could again be halved and both replanted. So, I hacked away. Truthfully, these were the most horrible looking plants in my collection. Odd-sized leaves stuck up from every direction, and a small bit of the support stem stood up above the level of the soil.

I moved the oddities to the furthest reaches of my watering tray. The three of them sat there looking out of place among the beauties on my shelves. It was many weeks later as I routinely glanced at one of them that I noticed a flower bud. Soon, the other two also produced flower buds, and little leaves began to form among the older ones, as well as along the exposed part of the stem.

Days later, the buds opened to the striped color of the original, which was my goal. What was rewarding was that the plants grew leaves, and what was once ugly slowly began to resemble a finished plant again. The small leaves that had appeared at the exposed side of the crown grew until babies began to form. Each plant yielded two or three, as I had hoped. There was little need for more, as shelf space was limited.

The babies were removed from the mother plants and potted in three-ounce solo cups. There was again a wait of many weeks before the plants matured enough to begin forming buds. The big day finally arrived, and each began to open. Every one bore the mother's color of light blue stripes and white background.

It was lots of fun duplicating a chimera even if the process was slightly unusual. Next, I'll try 'Suncoast Peppermint Cathy'. But this time, I'll try to do it the more accepted way.

Coming Events Deadlines

January Issue - November 1

March Issue - January 1

May Issue - March 1

July Issue - May 1

September Issue - July 1

November Issue - September 1

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Multicolored

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Website Improvement Fund: $680.00
Editor's New Computer Fund: $675.00
TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS: $2388.00

Cutting Back Your Big Sinns

By John Beaulieu
photos by author

Gesneriad hobbyists have been using *Achimenes* as a seasonal plant for many years, enjoying them as a hanging basket plant, similar to impatiens, year after year. They may not be aware that these are relatives of the African violet. They may also not be aware that the larger sinningias, another common gesneriad, can be utilized the same way as a seasonal patio plant.

The most common sinningias grown in this way are the color variations of the species *Sinningia sellovii* (sell-oh-vee-eye) and the popular hybrid 'Apricot Bouquet'. Most of the large sinningias, both the species and hybrids, make wonderful patio plants which can bloom for most of the summer.

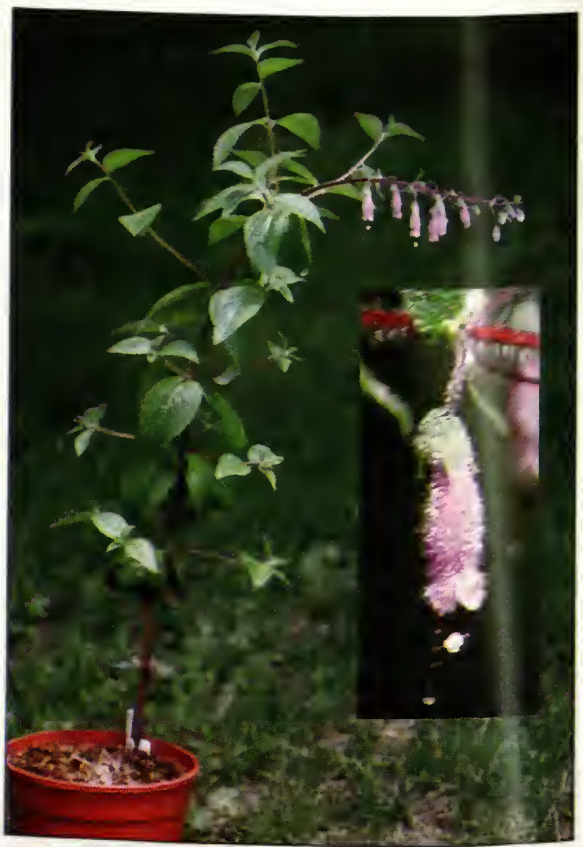
Don't worry about them taking up light garden or window space during the winter, as you simply let them go dormant in the fall, storing them out of the way, waiting for them to resprout around April. They must come inside to protect them from freezing.

Those growers in the extreme south have had success with these sinningias planted right in the ground. They are becoming so popular that many plant nurseries are offering them for sale for garden use.

Many of the 'bulb' people are also discovering the sinningias, and those that like the caudex plants are growing them with much of their interesting tubers exposed.

Achimenes have been popular gesneriads for summer growing in hanging baskets, with dormant rhizomes being stored over the winter. Hobbyists are now discovering that they can treat the large sinningias the same way as seasonal plants.

One of the most popular species of larger sinningias for outdoor growing is Sinningia sellovii. This species can grow from three to four feet in height, and the pendant red flowers are often visited by hummingbirds.



There is another color form of Sinningia sellovii, known as "Purple Rain," and it is equally easy to grow outdoors.

This is a large (14 inch dia.) pot of Sinningia "Apricot Bouquet" that has been brought in from growing outdoors over the summer. This plant can be trimmed back and allowed to go dormant so it can be stored out of the way for the winter months, not taking up valuable space under your lights.

When these plants are brought inside (usually in October), I will cut off all the foliage leaving only about one inch stubs of stem above the soil line. You can toss all the material into your compost, or you may select some new growth to propagate new starter plants from.

This is the same plant after being cut back. Once all the growth has been removed, you do not water it anymore. I store mine on the floor, under my plant stands. The tuber or tubers will remain dormant until around April, when they will start to sprout, and watering should be resumed.

Growth is seasonal, and these "Apricot Bouquet" flowers are growing on terminal stems. Some plants may produce some side stems to give additional bloom, but when they are done, they will eventually start to die back. Do not choose these terminal flower stems when taking cuttings for propagation.

If you want to propagate new plants, choose the new growth that may be coming up from the tubers or sprouting as side branches from the older stems.

Trim the new growth as you would for any tip cutting that you want to propagate. Place the cutting in new soil-less mix and under a clear dome for extra humidity until well rooted. Most sinningias will grow from cuttings like this, and they will soon produce a tuber at the base of the stem.

Cultivating Young African Violet Growers

By Joan Russo

"I think this was a very fun and exciting experience. It was amazing to watch the violet grow! The violet is so beautiful. The colors are so pretty, but I couldn't have done it without Joan. She helped me make my violet bloom right when I wanted it to and gave me a schedule to help make that happen. Being judged and getting ribbons made this experience even more fun. I look forward to sharing what I've learned with other kids my age."

Cassandra Clemente, age 11

This year, for the first time, the Bay State African Violet Show at Tower Hill Botanic Garden, included a show entry category for Non-Member Youth Growers. The idea was initiated by the members of Gateway, the Central MA African Violet Club, as an effort to encourage young people to learn about and grow African violets.

When Cassandra expressed interest in trying her hand at growing violets, I repotted (in Oyamas) two of my best growers, 'Rhapsodie Rosalie' and 'Optimara Maui,' and brought them to her house. I also brought along some basic instructions on watering, blooming tips, symmetry, grooming, and the "grow to show" schedule. She was on her way!

She was able to find a good spot for them, near a window, but not in direct sun, although the winter months were a challenge (as we all know). The temperature varied in her home and was often cooler than the violets liked. As a result, she was faced with powdery mildew. With leaf-washing, we managed to get it under control, and then the experienced violet grower (that would be me) thought it would be best if we introduced an artificial light source. About a month before the show, Cassandra's mother helped her hang a small florescent grow light to the underside of a book shelf using velcro tape because we didn't want to put screws or nails in the shelf. The violets were much happier, and buds began to develop.

Cassandra and her mom were such interested learners; every new leaf delighted them, and when the violet finally began to bloom - it was touch and go for a while - they were thrilled. Then came the tortuous time, a month before D day, THE SHOW, when the violet must be symmetrical and have the right number of open blooms for the size of the plant. Almost every day we were on the phone or email, discussing the bud count.

How many are there? Will they open? How open do they have to be? Should we move them closer to the lights? Did you wash the foliage? Should we repot?

Then three weeks before the show I received a call:

"Joan, the light fell! The velcro had let go and the light fell on both violets! 'Rhapsodic Rosalie' seems okay, but 'Optimara Maui' has two broken leaves!" I made a house call, and determined that 'Optimara Maui' would not make this year's show, but there was still hope for 'Rhapsodic Rosalie.' One week later, an email report from her mother confirmed that 'Rhapsodic Rosalie' would probably be able to compete. Its leaves were intact, and there were five small blooms.

With fingers crossed we waited for "show time." 'Rhapsodic Rosalie' responded to Cassandra's TLC with shiny foliage and five nice blooms. Would the judges decide that five blooms were enough for the small plant? The conclusion was, "Yes!"

Cassandra didn't just enter her violet in the show, she won a Best in Class Rosette and a First Place Blue Ribbon. When Gateway began this effort, we had several interested youngsters, but in the end, it was only Cassandra who persisted and was successful in growing a show winner. The experience for us both was rewarding and a lot of fun. I have to admit that I also felt very responsible. No one wants an eleven-year-old to feel as if they'd failed, so it was especially gratifying to see other Bay State members congratulate her for her entry and to watch her eyes as she watched the Best In Class rosette being placed by her violet. It was a good day for us all.

As a result of Cassandra's success in the Tower Hill Show, there has been a growing interest in violets among young people and their parents. Some new young growers have already acquired their plants. Cassandra hopes to grow even more violets to enter in the show so she has an even better chance of winning more ribbons.

Let the competition begin!

From *Ye Bay Stater*,
publication of the Bay State AVS

How Important is "SCALE" in Container Gardens

By Pat Hancock

When judging "Container Gardens" (terrariums, bottle gardens, dish gardens, or natural gardens), the first thing that 'pops out' at me is whether the "scale" is reasonably correct.

Container Gardens are miniature scenes, and everything planted should be in direct proportion to each other, just as they would be found in nature. Thus, if you could magnify in your mind the miniature scene to the size of the real landscape, would it look normal or correct, or would the individual plantings be out of proportion to each other? This is the question that I ask myself when judging Container Gardens.

More often than not, I find a tree or two planted to the rear that are far too tall or too bushy, and they completely dominate the rest of the scene.

I especially like a scene with varying heights and color tones. If something is used to represent water, it should be muted enough to really look like water, and any raw edges should not be visible.

The most common failure of "scale" in the landscape plan is in the size of the African violet or violets. It is often hard to find a violet that is small enough for the scale to be correct. Certainly, a plant of four or five inches in diameter is much too large. A violet that large would look like a bush or tree if you enlarged it to nature's size. The smallest violet that you can find is probably not small enough, but so much better than the ones I see so often that simply don't fit the landscape.

The violet or violets are not to be the "focal point" in Container Gardens. They are just part of the landscape, and as such, they need to melt into the scene in such a way as to keep the overall scale correct.

The Judges' Handbook states that "the combination of materials should be harmonious and there should be contrast of texture, size, color, and height to add interest. The size of the plants or foliage should be in reasonable proportion to each other."

Step back and view your Container Garden and try to imagine it on a much larger scale. Would it really look like a landscape of nature, or would the relationship of components be too large or too small to look real or natural?

From *The Dixie News*, publication of the Dixie AVS

AVSA Library Materials For Sale

219 DVD - Understanding the African Violet Species (2 DVD set) $29.95

AVSA Members: DVD $19.95 CD $10.95
Non-Members: DVD $21.95 CD $12.95

220 CD - "African Violets Around the Biggest Little City" - 2009 Reno, NV.
220 DVD - "African Violets Around the Biggest Little City" - 2009 Reno, NV.
218 DVD - "African Violet Trailers".
217 DVD - "Get Your Violet Kicks on Route 66!" 2008 A narrated show of the winners at the AVSA Convention and Show at Tulsa plus places, people, and events from the convention.
216 DVD - "From Tucson to Tulsa." 2004 - 2008 This audio narration and photography showcases five years of new introductions.
215 CD - "The Pittman Way of Growing" An update of the older Pittman slide show. This power point presentation has photos of new Pittman hybrids, and basic hints for propagating, hybridizing, growing, and showing.
214 CD - "The Other Gesneriads" A power point presentation of outstanding photography and hints for growing, showing, and judging the Other Gesneriads.
213 CD - "African Violet Troubles" An update of the older 35 mm slide show "African Violet Troubles." This CD is a replica of earlier photography. The vintage look and information is a look back at earlier, but still useful, violet growing techniques.
211 DVD - "Colorado, From the Mountains to the Prairie." 2007 Showcasing the Denver winners with photography and audio narrative. Includes the traditional slide show as well as many extras and reference materials enough for more than one affiliate meeting.

Specially Priced DVDs

AVSA Members: $14.95
Non-Members: $16.45

210 DVD - "Violets Vacation in Minnesota" 2006 Beautiful photography and audio narrative. Award winning exhibits from the AVSA Show and Convention.
209 DVD - "Violets Reign in the Queen City" 2005 Beautiful photography and audio narrative. Award winning exhibits from the AVSA Show and Convention.
207 DVD - "A Fiesta of Violets" 2004 Beautiful photography and audio narrative. Award winning exhibits from the AVSA Show and Convention.

Twenty Years of Chasing the Canary: the Quest for a True Yellow in African Violet Blossoms

~ Rich Follett ~

In 1989, at the 43rd Annual AVSA Convention in Kansas City, Missouri, Nolan Blansit from the Ozarks stunned select conventioneers with a box of yellow African violet blossoms – the first true yellows anyone had ever seen – and prompted AVSA Magazine columnist David Buttram to exclaim "[y]es, there *is* gold in those hills and I saw it." Mr. Blansit, a dedicated African violet hybridizer who was convinced that a true yellow could be achieved in African violets, had seen traces of yellow in some of his seedlings as early as 1984 and immediately began working single-mindedly to intensify both color and consistency. Although rumors of yellow-blossomed African violet seedlings had persisted for years (one early introduction called 'Yellow Breakthrough' was even registered with AVSA as early as 1972 by Lane and Eyerdom, but has since been lost), no one had ever produced a reliable, consistently pigmented true yellow bloom prior to 1989, and the African violet community was both delighted and amazed.

The May/June 1989 issue of the AVSA Magazine features a cover photograph of a bright yellow African violet with the inside note: "Nolan Blansit's seedling EW7 displays the extraordinary progress he has made in hybridizing the 'elusive yellow violet.'" Inside, on page 25, there is another featured photo of a seedling named 'EH45'; both exhibit the bright canary yellow color later seen in Mr. Blansit's still-popular hybrids 'Majesty' and 'His Promise.'

'Chantaspring' - Photo Credit: EvaBritta Thorssell

In order to more fully document the facts behind this amazing odyssey, I located Mr. Blansit, who is now living in Oregon and working with hybridization of Rhododendrons. I had the pleasure of an hour's phone conversation with Mr. Blansit, wherein I learned that he received the inspiration to begin working on a yellow African violet in 1977 when he and his wife Cindy were taking a trip up the West Coast from Seattle to Vancouver, B.C., Canada. Inspired by the magnificent natural beauty all around him, Mr. Blansit was relaxed and completely at peace with himself and the world when he heard an audible voice saying "I want you to trust in me for a yellow African violet." Oddly enough, his wife Cindy heard the same voice at precisely the same moment (this moment of divine inspiration was the reason for the names 'Majesty' and 'His' Promise' when Mr. Blansit's yellow hybrids were later named and released to an eager public).

Back home, Mr. Blansit immediately set to work, beginning with a cross between Holtkamp's 'Nevada' and the pink (with blue splash) 'Sea Queen.' A few of those first-cross seedlings had traces of yellow at the throat, although the presence was so faint that Mr. Blansit remarked "[i]f I hadn't had a good eye, I might not have noticed them." Subsequent crosses including 'Black Jack,' 'White Glory,' and 'Sparky' showed even more promise. When he had achieved a consistent degree of yellow in various seedlings, he sent the plants off to the lab at one of the world's largest plant nurseries for verification and also gave seedlings to the internationally respected African violet geneticist, Dr. Jeff Smith, for analysis; after extensive scientific testing, a confirmation was issued, and the yellow African violet became both a scientific and a popular reality. Dr. Jeff Smith responded to my e-mail about his part in the historic process with the following quote: "[t]he flower material I received was mostly white with yellow streaks in them.They were a bit of a disappointment because I had hoped for more yellow in the petals, but there was definitely a yellow pigment.I was excited that we had at least established an actual yellow pigment.The extractions I made were clearly yellow."

'Alchemy Antique Bells' - Photo Credit: Janet Stromberg

The entire process of hybridization, testing, and propagation for release had taken twelve years; at one point, Mr. Blansit applied for and received a grant and was growing more than 2,000 seedlings in his basement. There were dramatic moments as well; at one point, Cindy's foresight in saving some seeds rescued the entire project from oblivion. The long-hoped-for yellow African violet had finally arrived!

As would be expected, other hybridizers were eager to begin working with the yellow genes and began immediately to refine and intensify the yellow color along with even more desirable traits in foliage and growth. As early as 1993, Sydney Sorano of Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses produced 'Golden Threads,' a standard double white star with deep yellow mottling over medium green foliage which is still a favorite among growers and a proven show winner. Later, Paul Sorano would continue the evolution of the yellow African violet with such semi-miniature treasures as 'Gold Coins' and 'Lemon Drop.' The list of hybridizers who have further contributed to the refinement of the yellow African violet reads like a 'Who's Who': Hortense Pittman, Ralph and Olive Ma Robinson, Jeff Smith, and the always-surprising David Senk, to name a few. It seems everyone with an interest in hybridizing African violets has been working to perfect the yellow blossom!

Where, then, do we stand on the yellow African violet continuum? In honor of the twentieth anniversary of the yellow African violet odyssey, I decided to poll some of our most knowledgeable hybridizers and African violet enthusiasts to learn their perspectives on the matter. Their answers have shown me that most feel we still have a long way to go towards the true canary-yellow bloom we all long for; that the effort continues; that progress is being made, and that the originals still offer some of the most promising genetic material.

Here, then, are the questions I asked of each person interviewed:

1. What is the first 'yellow' African violet you can remember seeing (actual plant, not a picture)?
2. In what year and location (approximately) did # 1 occur? What was your overall impression of the violet you named in question #1?
3. Of the yellow African violets currently available, which one do you feel comes closest to a consistently reliable 'true' yellow?
4. How close have hybridizers come to the maximum possible degree of yellow in *saintpaulias*?
5. What do you think might lie 'beyond yellow' in terms of African violet hybridization?

While there is not enough space here to list all of the replies, I will share some of the most common responses below, followed by a few of the more interesting/informative/unexpected items.

1. Most people's 'first impression' yellow violets were: 'Majesty,' 'His Promise,' Ness' Fantasy Gold' or one of Swedish hybridizer Arne Johansson's crosses out of 'Ness' Fantasy Gold' – 'Ajohn's Winter Sun,' 'Ajohn's Moonlight Serenade' and 'Ajohn's Yellow Submarine.'
2. These 'first impression sightings' ranged from 1989 – 2007.
3. Most people were excited but somewhat dubious; since the yellow pigmentation existed primarily as rays and/or mottling over white blossoms, many felt that it was either unreliable or unstable. AVSA Immediate Past President Joyce Stork summed up the tone of the majority of the responses I received: "[t]he brightest color was 'post-it-note' yellow. Some were definitely yellow but not very attractive. We discussed that yellow was not a color that had much appeal to the broad majority of people, and that the pale dull yellow color wasn't remarkable enough to catch someone's eye unless it was specifically pointed out to them."
4. Most of the respondents concurred that there are a few standout yellows available to growers today. Their choices included: 'Warm Sunshine' (the most oft-mentioned), 'Chantaspring' (a buttery-yellow miniature trailer of unknown origin), 'Lemon Drop' and 'Golden Autumn.'
5. Almost everyone reported that, while considerable advances have been made in the pursuit of a consistent, true yellow African violet, there is still a great deal of work to be done. Olive Ma Robinson said that: "reliable yellow color has a LOT to do with environment" and that "with the present gene pool out there ... I think it will depend on mutations." Dr. Jeff Smith replied: "I think there is still a lot of room for work. There have been great strides in getting the yellow pigment over more of the flower. However; the yellow pigment is not consistently made

'Senk's Alchemy Parakeet' Photo Credit: Eric Ensley

in the flowers and is more pronounced when the plant is older and more mature. I think the growing conditions affect the amount of pigment too.The ideal situation would be to get a consistent yellow that extends over the full flower in every bloom cycle.We are not there yet." My favorite response, the most upbeat of the lot, came from Agnetha Widell of Sweden: "not as close as possible – but do remember it took 'breeders' to put 'really yellow' into begonias – we have glorious future ahead – LUCKY US!" Several people referenced time lines of twenty-five to thirty years to put yellow into petunias, orchids, begonias, etc.; it is clear that any improvements will need time to develop.

6. I was very surprised by the answers to this question about 'what lies beyond.' Eighty-five percent of the people who responded said that orange is the next great frontier for African violet hybridizers! This overwhelming majority either indicates that we enthusiasts think alike or that somebody *knows something*...

A few people added some very interesting 'additional comments.' Jeff Jackson (hybridizer of the 'Imp's' series) said: "A good growing show plant with intense yellow color is just around the corner (I'm very optimistic)"and further added: "Genetics and the mutation rate in African violets will always leave the door open for more interesting flower shapes, colors, and leaf traits.Miniatures, wasps, trailers, crown and mosaic variegation really have very little variety in their categories. I think in the next ten years, we'll see that change dramatically." On the other side of the equation, Joyce Stork commented: "... searching for the new and the weird is a bad idea if it sacrifices vitality and form. We prefer to concentrate on sturdy symmetrical foliage and excellent bloom count. Stability and consistency in many growing environments is also important. We've noticed that many of the show winners across the country are old hybrids ... the newer novelty flower colors are fun but they often aren't on show-worthy plants."

Ralph Robinson said: "like most breakthroughs, the next "great thing" likely will be more a matter of luck...and someone being wise enough to recognize the possibilities and work with it." Jeff Smith feels that "the yellow pigment seems to decay faster than other colors so the flowers don't last as long. This is another problem that needs work." Finally, Dale Martens expressed a vote of confidence for extreme longifolia and wasp hybridizer David Senk, as follows: " I think David Senk will be the one to create a strong yellow."

For those unfamiliar with his hybrids, David Senk has been upending the conventions of African violet hybridization for years with his interesting and unusual varieties, among them some of the best yellows we have seen in many years. He discovered a yellow seeding he came to call 'HDY (Home Depot Yellow) and worked its genes into the crosses that produced his Alchemy series – including such intense yellows as 'Senk's Alchemy Parakeet,' 'Alchemy Gold,' 'Senk's Alchemy Morning Star' and my personal favorite, 'Alchemy Antique Bells.' Dr. Jeff Smith says of 'Senk's Alchemy Parakeet': "I've seen Alchemy Parakeet develop some nice deep gold flowers with blue edges" (author's note: I have personally grown all of the Senk hybrids mentioned here and I can attest to the reliability of their yellow coloration). While David Senk may indeed be working on a true yellow even as we speak, his imagination is clearly running above and beyond anything in the canary family. He responded: "The holy grail is ORANGE!"

African violet hybridizers and enthusiasts alike have been 'chasing the canary' for twenty years now; whether your own African violet 'holy grail' is yellow, orange, green, or even turquoise (as Swedish grower Agnetha Widdell suggested in her response), it's clear that exciting things are on the way in the not-so-distant future. Perhaps you might even try to pick a shade or shape and make some crosses of your own. Who knows? You might just be the one to come up with the next 'big break' in the ever-evolving world of the amazing African violet!

Special thanks to: Gary Beck, Nolan Blansit, Nancy Braun, Travis Davis, Barbara Elkin, June Huebbe, Jeff Jackson, Vladimir Kalgin from Russia (who reported the responses of twenty-five Russian survey respondents), Dale Martens, George McDonald, Dr. Ralph and Olive Ma Robinson, Raymond Russell, David Senk, Dr. Jeff Smith, Paul Sorano, Joyce and Kent Stork, Janet Stromborg, Fay Wagman, Agnetha Widdell (who polled more than a dozen Swedish enthusiasts) and to AVSA Magazine editor Ruth Rumsey for asking me to research and write this piece.

AVSA OFFICE HOURS
Monday - Thursday
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Plant Symmetry

By Dr. Jeff Smith

In my opinion, plant symmetry is a matter of genetics and culture. There is a definate genetic component in that some plants will have nice flat foliage that shapes without any real effort on the part of grower. Hybridizers have been selecting for this trait for generations; this is the type of foliage we want in show plants. It actually surprises many outside of the African violet world that we put such an emphasis on well shaped foliage in our show plants. Many think that overall plant size and number of blooms are the most important features in a show plant. In contrast to our show plants, there are also plenty of other plants out there that shaping their foliage is a real challenge. Some plants throw leaves out at odd angles and twists and don't have much overall symmetry. While this can be cultural, I'm certain there is a genetic component to these plants too. If the same cultivar grows badly for several people, I'm inclined to think the reason is genetic not cultural.

Culture plays a large part, particularly the direction and amount of the light as you mention. With most of us growing plants under artificial light, we don't have to worry as much about phototropism or plants bending toward the light. Still, it doesn't hurt to give some rotation to your plants under the lights just to even out their exposure and keep the growth even on all sides.

One thing you may not have noticed regarding culture is that the size of the leaves can change depending on your growing conditions. This is most apparent if you have allowed a plant to become stressed by filling up the pot and delaying transplanting too long. The leaves will be smaller than usual under these conditions. When you do pot up the plant into a larger pot, the next set of leaves will grow to their maximum size. This can give you rows of smaller versus rows of larger leaves, spoiling the symmetry. This is one of the reasons why it is important to gradually pot up a large show plant at regular intervals during its increase in size; this will be the only way to keep the leaves of the same size over several months growth.

From Lone Star AVC *Newsletter.* Response to a question from AV International, an on-line group for Africanviolet lovers.

Metropolitan St. Louis African Violet Council

Metropolitan St. Louis African Violet Council members took a moment out at the end of their 54th annual show to pose in front of a wall hanging that is a life size photo of one of the actual buildings at the Missouri Botanical Gardens.

RECOGNIZING EARLY SIGNS OF SOME PESTS AND DISEASES

By Sue Gardner
Australia

Problems in African violets can have various causes. Lack of water, light, or fertilizer can be three cultural causes. Over-watering is often a cause.

However, the problems caused by pests or diseases can create havoc in our collections if not quickly dealt with. Pests can be insects, fungi, or mites. These are usually transmitted by people, other newly purchased plants, pets, or breezes blowing into areas from the outside.

How do we recognise the first signs of pests – before they take holds of all our plants? Here are a few tips.

Recognizing Fungal attack

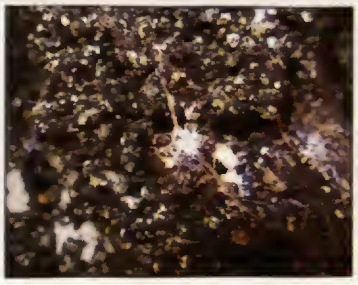
If you see the following white powdery substance on leaves or flowers, you know you have **powdery mildew**. The early signs on flower stems are shown. Spray with a recommended mildew control.

Drooping plant?

If your plant droops, as shown in the picture, take it out of the pot to see condition of the roots. The picture shows roots rotted away. The next picture shows that the **fungus** infection has travelled up into the tissue of the stem, so that a crown cutting is not possible. A leaf cutting is the best option.

If the roots are not rotten, you may see a white fuzzy patch in the potting mix. Soil **Mealy Bugs** can also cause plants to become sick. When you look carefully for a minute or two, can you see small oval whitish insects moving slowly in the potting mix?

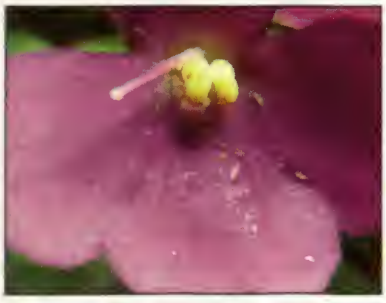
In the first picture, early signs of mealy bug in the potting mix are shown. In the next one, the infestation has advanced, and the third shows mealy bugs in the bottom of a reservoir.



If you find soil mealy bug, it is best to take a crown cutting, wash it well, and plant. Keep the cutting covered until new roots grow and are found to be free of mealy bug.

Pollen spilled on petals

If you see some pollen on petals, look more closely. Tap the pollen sacs and watch for small, elongated insects running rapidly over the petals. Do this several times to be sure. Use a magnifying glass to see them better. They are **Thrips!** Disbud after spraying with a pyrethrum spray. Thrips are very hard to eradicate. Disbud several times for greatest effect. Alternatively, use a metered spray dispenser, which seems to eradicate them successfully.



Chewed Leaves

Are there brown, green black, or fawn insects chewing the foliage on your plant? These are aphids. Spray, then wash off the dead bodies! The picture shows leaves damaged by Aphids.

Does the crown of your plant have the following symptoms?

a) Excessively hairy
b) Stunted or deformed growth
c) Grey appearance
d) Flower stalks short, fat, or deformed

If the grey appearance is caused by fine hairlike growth it could be Botrytis. However, the usual cause of these symptoms is Cyclamen or other mite. Throw plant out and treat other plants on shelf by spraying with miticide. The first picture shows a plant

with thickened deformed petioles and in the second one, the center is grey and dry and not developing. Both plants had mites. So if you see something similar, check your plant before mites spread further.

Don't confuse fertilizer burn with mite infestation.

These pictures are not meant to put you off growing African violets. It is best to be able to recognize signs of pests and diseases so that you can deal with them before they become a big problem.

2009 AVSA LIBRARY MESSAGE

By Anne Nicholas, *Library Chairman*

Last year, the AVSA Library committee introduced new DVDs and CDs that were educational, enjoyable, and professionally produced. These items included 2 DVDs: "Get Your Violet Kicks on Route 66" (the 2008 Tulsa show), New Introductions ("From Tucson to Tulsa"), and 3 CDs: "The Pittman Way of Growing," "The Other Gesneriads "(Growing and Judging), and "African Violet Troubles." Each DVD or CD has beautiful photography, and all the DVDs and one of the CDs have an audio narrative. These items have sold very well, especially for use as club programs, and continue to have great sales on the AVSA website and through the AVSA office.

In April, the AVSA Library committee introduced 2 new products at the 2009 AVSA Convention. One is a 2 DVD set on the origin, culture, and new classification system of the Species. This DVD set is more expensive because of its vast four-part content. The other DVD introduced in Reno is an update of the older 35mm slide show on Trailers by Bev Promersberger. This wonderful DVD not only includes Bev's outstanding instructions and methods of growing trailers, but also includes her original audio narrative. Both of these new programs are now available on the website and through the AVSA office.

We have also produced a CD, DVD, and 35mm slide show of the Reno show winners, available through the AVSA office and website. We are pleased to announce that the cost of Library Rentals has been reduced. Any new rental program will be priced at $15.00, and all rental materials over two-years-old will rent for $10.00.

As always, the AVSA Library committee members donate so much time, effort, and talent to these products. This committee works year around, and I cannot thank them enough. These wonderful, talented folks include Janet Castiglione, Dr. Barb Burde, Marjorie Bullard, Tom Glembocki, Libbie Glembocki, Richard Follett, Dr. Richard Nicholas, and Jacquie Eisenhut.

DVDs and CDs of past National Conventions and Shows, as well interesting instructional programs on growing African violets are now available for purchase through the AVSA office and on the AVSA web site - AVSA.org.
See the entire list of these items on page 31.

AVSA LIBRARY RENTALS
ORDER ALL LIBRARY MATERIALS FROM AVSA OFFICE
DESCRIPTIVE LIST OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

SECTION 1: CONVENTION SHOWS

The following are slide programs of outstanding exhibits at National Convention shows; they are especially entertaining for members not attending conventions.

197L "GO WILD IN OMAHA - 2000" (C) (80 Slides) Omaha 2000.
200L "CHICAGO SHOW BEAUTIES - 2001" Chicago. (80 Slides).
201L "MR. VIOLET GOES TO WASHINGTON" (C) (80 Slides) 2002.
202L "BEST OF THE 90'S" (C) (80 Slides) 1990-1999.
203L "35th ANNUAL AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY OF CANADA CONVENTION & SHOW" May 1-5, 2002 (80 Slides).
204L "LOUISIANA LAGNIAPPE" (C) (80 Slides).
206L 2003 CANADIAN NATIONAL AV SHOW (80 Slides).
207L "A FIESTA OF VIOLETS" - 2004 (C) (80 Slides). Tucson, AZ.
209L "VIOLETS REIGN IN THE QUEEN CITY - Cincinnati 2005 (80 Slides).
210L "VIOLETS VACATION IN MINNESOTA" - 2006 - (C) (80 Slides).
211L "COLORADO FROM THE MOUNTAINS TO THE PRAIRIE" - 2007 - (C) (80 Slides).
212L "GET YOUR VIOLET KICKS ON ROUTE 66" - (C) (80 Slides). 2008 Tulsa, OK.
221L "AFRICAN VIOLETS AROUND THE BIGGEST LITTLE CITY" - 2009 Reno, NV. (C) (80 slides).

SECTION II: NEW INTRODUCTIONS

The following is a series of programs compiled from slides of new cultivars submitted by hybridizers and commercial members.

199L "NEW INTRODUCTIONS - 2001" (48 slides).
205L "NEW INTRODUCTIONS OF 2002 AND 2003" (C) (50 Slides).

SECTION III : AFRICAN VIOLET LIFE

Section III is a series of slide programs relative primarily to African violet culture and related subjects. They are somewhat dated but with much helpful information for the novice grower.

140L "MULTIPLYING SAINTPAULIAS" (65 Slides) Basic program on African violet propagation including leaf cuttings, plant division, seed, and grafting. Slides show how to produce and plant seeds.
147L "THE AFRICAN VIOLET PLANT" (77 Slides) A good, basic program identifying leaf types, blossom form and colors, and diseases that affect the foliage.
150L "THE PITTMAN WAY OF GROWING VIOLETS" (C) (84 Slides) A step-by-step visual program on growing and grooming miniature and semiminiature African violets.
151L "THE SAINTPAULIA SPECIES" (79 Slides) A comprehensive, educational, workshop-type program. Very thorough and somewhat technical. A depicted work by Neva Anderson.
161L "POINTERS IN JUDGING" (C) (74 Slides) A revised version of workshop program for judges and exhibitors. Emphasis on grooming of plants in preparation for showing.
182L "TRAILERS - MAKING THEM DO WHAT I WANT THEM TO DO" (C) (70 Slides) (1997) Bev Promersberger demonstrates how she grows trailers that make the "Winners Circle".
194L "DESIGNING FOR SHOW" (66 Slides) Program includes step-by-step instruction for construction of a terrarium followed by lovely examples of the different design types for exhibition.

SECTION IV: GESNERIADS

Listed below are programs identifying African violet cousins, their care, and propagation.

139L "MEET THE FAMILY" (C) (60 Slides) A vivid look at some of the other members of the gesneriad family, compiled and narrated by Margaret Waguespack. An informative program for those who want to broaden their growing horizons or for those who just want to "meet the family".

178L **"UNUSUAL GESNERIADS FOR THE LIGHT GARDEN"** (C) (54 Slides) A group of the smaller gesneriads suitable for the light stand.

SECTION V: VIOLET PESTS AND DISEASES

These slide programs identify pests and diseases and their impact on African violet cultivars.

132L **"AFRICAN VIOLET PESTS"** (C) (52 Slides) A short, succinct program by Dr. Charles L. Cole with vivid illustration of common African violet pests.

152L **"VIOLET TROUBLES"** (63 Slides) Pests, diseases, and results of poor culture exhibited in the program. An oldie, but good basic information.

SECTION VI: SPECIAL PROGRAMS

187L **"30TH AVSC CONVENTION - TORONTO 1997"** Slides of the Canadian Show. (80 slides).

198L **"AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY OF CANADA Convention & Show, Ottawa, 2001"**, (87 Slides).

VIDEO TAPES AND DVDS

173L **"AFRICAN VIOLETS IN THE NEW GARDEN"** Ken Froboese talks violets - a visit with Ken in his greenhouse, Hill Country African Violets.

185L **"GROWING BEAUTIFUL AFRICAN VIOLET TRAILERS"** (28 minutes). Anna Jean Landgren demonstrates how she grows trailers. One of a series of presentations for TV by members of Illinois State AV Society.

186L **"TEACHING THE TRICKS"** (27 minutes) A second presentation of the cable TV productions - this one shows Jean Willey instructing new grower Tracy Bruns in the basics of African violet growing. Particularly good for novice growers.

188L **"RAGS TO RICHES"** - Another cable TV presentation in the series of House Plant How-tos. This is by Andrea Worell as she demonstrates how to groom or redo those African violets that need "help".

189L **"PROPAGATING YOUR POSIES"** - This video, also by Andrea Worell, shows how she starts African violets and some other gesneriads. Another of the House Plant How-tos series. Andrea has a new slant on an old idea. Very entertaining.

196L **"BASIC AFRICAN VIOLET CARE"** - 25 minute video by Don Geiss is a good introduction to growing African Violets.

PACKETS

1. Packets are loaned for a period of one month, as available.
2. Requests for two or more packets will be filled whenever possible.
3. Packets must be returned postpaid by FIRST, THIRD, OR FOURTH CLASS MAIL.
4. Cost of each packet is $3.00 and must be paid by check to AVSA at time of request.

DESCRIPTIVE LIST OF PACKETS

155L **JUST FOR FUN PACKET:** "Violet Carol" Christmas skit in one act. A fun way to celebrate the holidays with a skit performed by your club members. This is an original skit written by Kent Stork of Kent's Flowers, Fremont, NE, and donated to the AVSA Library.

156L **NEWSLETTER/MAGAZINE PACKET:** Anyone desiring to start a newsletter or magazine would find this packet helpful.

157L **PROGRAM-PLANNING PACKET:** Suggestions to help a program chairman or committee plan the programs for a club's activities.

158L **SHOW SCHEDULES PACKET:** Show schedules of African violet shows from different sections of the country. Excellent for new ideas and those clubs planning their first show.

159L **YEARBOOK COLLECTION PACKET:** This packet contains yearbooks from various affiliate clubs. Especially recommended for clubs producing their first yearbook.

192L **INSTALLATION PACKET:** A collection of different installation programs that will be found interesting and useful for installing your new officers.

RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR USE OF AVSA LIBRARY MATERIALS

Library materials are available for use by AVSA members and affiliates in good standing, subject to the following rules and regulations.

REQUEST FOR MATERIALS

Send requests to the AVSA Office, 2375 North St., Beaumont, Texas 77702. If you do not have an AVSA order form, please include in your request **(1) Name of affiliate, (2) Name of person ordering and person's membership number, (3) Shipping address, (4) Name of slide program or packet, (5) Whether or not cassette (where available) is desired, (6) Date to be shown.** Order forms are included in shipment for future use.

SLIDE PROGRAMS – VIDEO TAPES

1. Make request for reservation three (3) months in advance of date desired with information outlined above. Give first, second, and third choices of slide programs for each reservation date.
2. Slide programs and video tapes are shipped using a special shipping box. Please use the special box to return the programs to the AVSA office immediately after scheduled reserved date. Return by UPS or First Class Mail only. For First Class, we request that you insure the program for $50.00. If you use UPS, the package is automatically insured for $100.00. For members in other countries: please return programs postpaid by the safest and most expeditious postal means available.

A $5.00 PER WEEK PENALTY WILL BE ASSESSED FOR ANY PROGRAM NOT POSTMARKED WITHIN FOUR (4) DAYS AFTER SCHEDULED RESERVED DATE, UNLESS OTHER ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE.

Return programs to:
AVSA OFFICE
2375 NORTH STREET
BEAUMONT, TEXAS 77702

3. Special requests for two or more slide programs for the same date may be made and will be filled when possible, but such requests are not encouraged because of the great demand for slide programs and the limited number available.
4. **The cost of programs from 2008 and 2009 are $15.00. All programs from 2007 or earlier are $10. All will include cassette if available. Only those slide programs in the descriptive list with a "(C)" after the titles have cassettes.**

AVSA LIBRARY ORDERS

All AVSA Library requests must be made in writing. After you have emailed <avsa@earthlink.net>, faxed (409) 839-4329, or sent your request by postal service (AVSA, 2375 North St., Beaumont, TX 77702), you will receive a confirmation from the AVSA Office. If you do not receive a confirmation within THREE WEEKS, it is YOUR responsibility to check with the office and make sure that your request has been received.

You're Never Too Old ...

By Pat Knight
Tidewater African Violet Society

Nell Pace, 97, won Best in Show at the Tidewater African Violet Show in Norfolk, Virginia, "Violets on Vacation" on May 2, 2009 with her plant 'Victorian Ribbons.' The plant also won the following categories: Best in Class; Best Standard; Best Variegated; Best Chimera; Best Lyons; and a Tri-Color Ribbon.

"Nell" was born Myfanwy Morgan in England on June 20th, 1911. Her mother brought her and her three siblings to Virginia when she was very young. When Nell was 3, her mother passed away and a very kind lady in the Larchmont neighborhood of Norfolk, Laura Butt, adopted all four of the children.

After graduating from high school, Nell went on to further her education and graduated from Norfolk Memorial as a Registered Nurse. During her training there, she met and married Charles Pace in 1932, and together they raised three children.

After Charles passed away, a few years later Nell married Ray Kundtz. Ray owned a greenhouse in the Pungo area of Virginia Beach where they raised all kinds of plants. Ray also loved African violets, so he and Nell decided to join the only group in the area at the time, the Pioneer African Violet Society in 1976. Around 1980 the group changed its name to the Tidewater African Violet Society (TAVS) and Ray and Nell continued to be members for many years. A few years later Ray passed away, but Nell continued to be a member of TAVS because of her love for African violets.

Nell has been our club's "Sunshine Lady" for over twenty years, mailing out cards for every occasion to all of our members and never missing a beat. Nell has been a long-time member of AVSA, and over the years, she has come to love and grow the "other" gesneriads, and is also a member of the Gesneriad Society. When able, Nell will go to local African Violet Shows, MAAVS Conventions, and even AVSA National Conventions, enjoying all the beautiful plants and taking many new babies home to enjoy and grow for next year's show.

Today, Nell lives in a senior apartment complex in Norfolk on the 9th floor and, occasionally, when the elevator goes out, she has to climb the stairs. At 98 now, she can still do it!

When Nell is not working on her plants, she loves to knit and crochet, do crewel work and tatting. But her first love is her plants, and it really shows. In her small apartment she has a 4-tiered light stand where she's able to grow all of her plants, and she even has a small step stool that she has to climb to tend to the plants on the top shelf. She wick-waters all of her plants with filtered water, uses Optimara Potting Mix, a variety of fertilizers, and SuperThrive.

When our club was getting ready for our show this year, we found out that Nell wasn't feeling well, and wouldn't be able to bring in her plants for the show. One of our members went over to her apartment, picked up her plants, and entered them for her. She wasn't able to get to the show on the day of judging, but when we all found out that her plant won "Best in Show," we called her to let her know the big news. She was shocked, but thrilled. The last day of the show, her daughter brought her to the show so that she could see for herself that she had won the big prize. We were able to capture that happy moment, and I'm sure it'll be something she will always remember.

So, the moral of this story is that you're never too old for anything, especially growing a prize winning African violet!

Raleigh 2010 Convention – Specific Awards

It won't be long before we are packing our bags for the next convention in beautiful Raleigh, S.C.! Here is the list of Specific Variety and Collection Awards donated so far for the 2010 convention show which should be lovely! The awards that we give are important because they encourage people to show their plants, and they serve as a reward for their hard work. We would especially like to invite those who are members residing along the East Coast to talk with your club members and donate one or two awards for this convention which will be held in your area. All awards will be listed in the convention book. Many thanks to those members and affiliates who make our awards possible through their donations, and we encourage each of you to consider giving an award.

To be part of this convention effort, please send your awards (payable in U.S. funds) to:

Judith Carter, *AVSA Awards Chair*
1825 W. Lincoln St.
Broken Arrow, OK 74012-8509
Email: AVSAawards@valornet.com

The deadline to be included on the Jan/Feb AVM Awards page is October 15th, 2009. Please include an email address or telephone contact.

Specific Amateur Awards

Best Aca's Red Ember - $25 – John and Doris Brownlie (Canada)
Best Concord - $100 – Kazuo Horikoshi (Tokyo, Japan)
Best Dolores' Sugar Candy - $25 – Dolores Harrington (MN)
Best Emilie Savage - $25 – Linda & Jim Owens (OH)
Best Everdina - $50 – Hans Inpijn (CA)
Best Lilian Jarrett Variegated - $100 – Anne Tinari (NY)
Best Lyon's Carnation Sprinkles - $25 – Cathleen Graves (WA)
Best The King - $25 – Janet Riemer (CT)
Best Nancy Hayes - $25 – Nancy Hayes (CT)
Best Optimara Oklahoma - $25 – John & Judy Carter (OK)
Best Precious Pink - $25 – Hortense & Ray Pittman (TX)
Best Rebel's Minnesota Haze - $25 – Ruth Bann (MN)
Best Rebel's Minnesota Haze - $100 – Minnesota Convention Committee
Best Rosie Ruffles - $25 – Dolores Harrington (MN)
Best The Alps - $100 – Kazuo Horikoshi (Tokyo, Japan)
Best Rodeo Country - $75 – Spring Branch AVC (TX)

Amateur Collections

Best Holtkamp Collection $300/coin – Holtkamp Greenhouses (TN)
2nd Best Holtkamp Collection $200 – Holtkamp Greenhouses (TN)
3rd Best Holtkamp Collection $100 – Holtkamp Greenhouses (TN)
Best Buckeye Collection $200 – Pat's Patch/Pat Hancock (OH)
2nd Best Buckeye Collection $100 – Pat's Patch/Pat Hancock (OH)
Best Robinson Collection $150 – Ralph & Olive Ma Robinson (NY)
2nd Best Robinson Collection $50 – Ralph & Olive Ma Robinson (NY)
Best Lyon's Greenhouse Collection $200 – Paul Sorano (NY)
2nd Best Lyon's Greenhouse Collection $100 – Paul Sorano (NY)
Best Russian Hybrid Collection $300 – Vladimir & Tatiana Kalgin (Moscow, Russia)
2nd Best Russian Hybrid Collection $200 – Vladimir & Tatiana Kalgin (Moscow, Russia)
3rd Best Russian Hybrid Collection $100 – Vladimir & Tatiana Kalgin (Moscow, Russia)

Commercial Collections

Best Holtkamp Collection $300 – Holtkamp Greenhouses (TN)
2nd Best Holtkamp Collection $200 – Holtkamp Greenhouses (TN)
3rd Best Holtkamp Collection $100 – Holtkamp Greenhouses (TN)

Specific Other Gesneriad Awards

Best Ozark Sinningia $35 – David Harris (MO)
Best Thad's Episcia - $25 – Thad Scaggs (FL)

This listing has only Specific Variety and Collection Awards. For all current awards, go to AVSA.org, click on National Convention and then Awards. A full awards list will appear in the January/February AVM.

Specific variety awards for Raleigh closed June 15th, 2009. They are now being accepted for the 2011 AVSA Convention.

"And the winners are . . ."

By Mary J. Corondan

434 Plumwood Way • Fairview, TX 75069

Email: mcorondan@yahoo.com

VC OF BURLINGTON COUNTY, NJ – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Picasso, Happy Cricket, Ma's Debutante; 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Gleeful Elf, Smitten Kitten, Rob's Twinkle Blue; Best in Show/Best Trailer: Rob's Galiwinku; Best Standard: Picasso; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Fiddle Faddle; Best Miniature: Gleeful Elf; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Sandy Skalski.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Jersey Snow Drops, Optimara EverPraise, Tiger; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Orchid, Orchard's Bumble Magnet, Shirl's Red Sky; Best Species: *Saintpaulia velutina*; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Kim'; Best Design, **Susan Arnao.** Design Sweepstakes, **Laurel Brown.**

AVC OF MORRIS COUNTY, NJ – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Freckles Galore, Rebel's Rose Bud, Jersey Snow Flakes; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Ness' Cranberry Swirl, Ness' Sno Fun, Rob's Suicidal Squirrel; Best in Show/Best Standard: Rebel's Rose Bud; Best Trailer: Ramblin' Lace; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Bob Kurzynski.** Best Species Collection: *Saintpaulia* clone *grandifolia #237, Saintpaulia* clone *orbicularis* var. *purpurea, Saintpaulia* clone *velutina* lite; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* clone *grandifolia #237*; Best Gesneriad: *Petrocosmea rosettifolia*, **Alicia Belyo.** Best Semiminiature: Ness' Satin Rose, **Jill Fischer.** Best Miniature: Rob's Chilly Willy, **Karyn Cichocki.** Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Emilia Rykowski.**

AV AND GESNERIAD SOCIETY OF WESTERN NEW YORK, NY – Winners: Best in Show/Best Standard: Simpler Times, **Elaine Geiger.** Best Semiminiature: Rob's Miss Sniffles, **Barbara Donsky.** Best Trailer: Rob's Jinda Lee, **Margaret Jasinski.** Best Species: *Saintpaulia tongwensis*, **Doreen Cesari.** Best Gesneriad: *Chirita* 'Bridal Veil', **Paul Kroll.** Best Design, **Judy Niemira.**

AVS OF DAYTON, OH – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Wrangler's Dixie Celebration, Christmas Dream, Powwow; Best in Show/Best Standard: Wrangler's Dixie Celebration, **Anne Thomas.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Maggie Lee, Ma's Debutante, Optimara Martinique, **Stacie Hecht.** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Celina Elegance, Jolly Eyes, Lollipop Kid; Best Semiminiature: Celina Elegance; Best Miniature: Jolly Blue Clouds, **Pat Hancock.** Best Species: *Saintpaulia* subspecies *grotei*, **Dieter Johnson.** Best Gesneriad: *Kohleria* 'Napoleon V'; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Mel Grice.**

AVS OF ROCHESTER, NY – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Lela Marie, Waterdancer, Blue Dragon; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Ness' Satin Rose, Plumberry Glow, Sunshine Lady; Best in Show/Best Standard: Waterdance; Best Semiminiature: Ness' Satin Rose; Best Miniature: Honey Blue Ace; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Doug Burdick.** Best Trailer: Ramblin' Amethyst, **Jim Murphy.** Best Species: *Saintpaulia velutina* var. lite, **Barbara Gogoll.** Best Design, **Trudy Murphy.** Design Sweepstakes, **Barbara Festenstein.**

AVS OF SPRINGFIELD, DELAWARE COUNTY, PA – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Optimara Connecticut, Optimara Colorado II, Optimara Kentucky; 2nd Best Species Collection: *Saintpaulia velutina, Saintpaulia rupicola, Saintpaulia orbicularis* var. *purpurea*; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Irish Flirt, Rob's Scrumptious, Rob's Pink Buttercups; Best in Show/Best Trailer/Best Species: *Saintpaulia rupicola*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Joan Santino.** Best Species Collection: *Saintpaulia grandifolia #237, Saintpaulia grandifolia #299, Saintpaulia orbicularis*, **Peggy Mooney.** Best Standard: Optimara EverPraise; Best Gesneriad: *Chirita eburnean*; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Barbara Jones.** Best Semiminiature: Ness' Crinkle Blue, **Peggy Mooney.**

AVS OF SYRACUSE, NY – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buffalo Hunt, Ma's Show Girl, EK-Dikaia Orkhideia, **Barbara Ellison.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Scarlet Sky, Rebel's Splatter Kake, EK-Goluboglazaia, **Karen Dupree.** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Suicidal Squirrel, Ness' Crinkle Blue, Teen Thunder; Best in Show/Best Miniature: Rob's Chilly Willy; Best Standard: Bob Serbin; Best Semiminiature: Teen Thunder; Best Trailer: Nancy Hayes; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Lee Hoke.** 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Jitterbug, Frosted Denim, Orchard's Bumble Magnet; Best Species: *Saintpaulia shumensis*; Best Gesneriad: *Chirita brassacoides* 'Marble Leaf', **Donna Coleman.** Best Design, **Penny Moore.** Design Sweepstakes, **Robin Yager.**

ALBUQUERQUE AVC, NM – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Optimara Hiroshige, Optimara Georgia, Rhapsodie Michelle; Best Standard: Optimara Georgia, **Debra Chase.** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Boondoggle, Rob's Snake Charmer, Rob's Squeeze Toy; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Pat Dockerty.** Best Semiminiature: Lyon's Fireworks, **Teresa Dominguez.** Best Gesneriad: *Episcia* 'Silver Skies', **June Spooner.** Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Martha Mitchell.**

BERGEN COUNTY AVS, NJ – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Alliance, Optimara Haiti, Windy Day; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Cecil Grimes.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Picasso, Optimara Haiti, Impostor; Best in Show/Best Standard: Picasso, **Samira James.** Best

Semiminiature: Plum Delicious, **Barbara Church.** Best Gesneriad: *Petrocosmea minor*; Best Design, **Lee Borey.** Design Sweepstakes, **Debi Powell.**

CAPITAL DISTRICT AVS, NY – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Harbor Blue, Smokey Moon, Goluboi Tuman; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Ooey Gooey, Mac's Southern Springtime; Rob's Boogie Woogie; Best Standard: Optimara EverJoy; Best Trailer: Ramblin' Lassie; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Margaret Califano.** Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Lollipop Kid; Best species: *Saintpaulia ionantha* subspecies *velutina*; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Texas Hot Chili', **Alvin Breisch.** Best Miniature: Rob's Zippity Doo, **Helen Tanski.** Best Design, **Andrea Freeman.** Design Sweepstakes, **Vincent Ozimek.**

CENTRAL JERSEY AVS, NJ – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Rhapsodie Mary, Maas' Janet, Picturesque; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Little Pro, Wee Be, Little Prize; Best in Show/Best Standard: Rhapsodie Mary; Best Semiminiature; Wee Be; Best Trailer: Milky Way Trail; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* subspecies *grandifolia*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Ron Ennis.** 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Mac's Black Jack, Mac's Kismet's Knight, Mac's Quaintly Quintessential, **George McDonald.** Best Miniature: Rob's Rinky Dink, **Anthony Metta.** Best Gesneriad: *Episcia* 'Kee Wee'; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Jan Murasko.**

CHATTANOOGA AVS, GA – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Optimara EverGrace, EK-Goluboglazaia Rossiia, Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler; 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Outer Orbit, Rob's Zoot Suit, Ness' Cranberry Swirl; Best in Show/Best Standard: Optimara EverGrace, **Tom Greer.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: *Saintpaulia* clone *difficilis*, *Saintpaulia* clone *confusa*, *Saintpaulia ionantha* subspecies *ionantha* var. *ionantha*; Best Species Collection: *Saintpaulia* clone *difficilis*, *Saintpaulia* clone *confusa*, *Saintpaulia ionantha* subspecies *ionantha* var. *ionantha*; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Outer Orbit, Thunder Surprise, Shirl's Happy Tears; Best Semiminiature: Shirl's Happy Tears; Best Miniature: Jolly Orchid; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* clone *confusa*; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Danny Tidwell.** Best Trailer: Rob's Gundaroo, **Christel Collier.** Best Gesneriad: *Aeschynanthus hildebrandii*, **Ramona Hodges.** Best Design, **Bob Green.**

CINCINNATI AVS, OH – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Seductress, Plenty of Pepper, Apache Dynamo, **Sancy McIntosh.** Best Species Collection: *Saintpaulia* 5b clone *difficilis, Saintpaulia* 5b clone *velutina, Saintpaulia* 8 *rupicola*; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5b clone *velutina*, **Karen Malott.** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Optimara Little Ottawa, Rob's Hopscotch, Rob's Calypso Beat; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Kentucky Gooseberries; Best Miniature: Everdina; Best Trailer: Ramblin' Spots; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Penny Wichman.** Best Standard: Buckeye Nobility, **Pat Hancock.** Best Gesneriad: *Kohleria* 'Napoleon V'; Best Design, **Mel Grice.** Design Sweepstakes (tie): **Mel Grice and Sandy McIntosh.**

DELAWARE AV AND GESNERIAD SOCIETY, DE – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Ming Blue, Rebel's Night Breezes, Ma's Party Music; Best Gesneriad: *Chirita* 'Kazu'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Libby Beanke.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Kaylih Marie, Anna Kreeck, Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler; Best in Show/Best Standard: Black Magic, **Nancy Muray.** Best Semiminiature: Burgundy Kid; Best Trailer: Pixie Blue, **Barbara Borleske.** Best Miniature: Rob's Shutterbug, **Bobbie Lafashia.** Best Design, **Terry Celano.** Design Sweepstakes, **Carol Callaghan.**

THE EARLY BIRD VC, AL – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Caribbean Blue, Halo's Aglitter, Ma's Wonder Woman; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Boogie Woogie, Snuggles Little Dreamer, Rob's Kitten Caboodle; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Kitten Caboodle; Best Miniature: Rob's Lucky Number; Best Trailer: Rob's Lilli Pilli; Best Gesneriad: *Aeschynanthus hildebrandii*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Ramona Hodges.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Rhapsodie Evelyn, Rhapsodie Natalie, Glacier Queen, **Jerry Goodall.** Best in Show/Best Standard: Tiger's Son, **Sandra Campbell.** Best Design, **Donna Henderson.**

FANTASY AVC, FL – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Ma's White Elephant, Funambule, The Alps; Best Standard: Funambule; Best Trailer: Cherokee Trail; Best Gesneriad: *Sinningia* 'Peridot's Darth Vader'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Thad Skaggs.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Rodeo Country, Ness' Candy Pink, The King; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Definitely Darryl, Ness' Satin Rose, Lemon Drop; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Definitely Darryl; Design Sweepstakes, **Sally Scaggs.** Best Design, **Ronnie Ashcroft.**

FIRST AVS OF WICHITA FALLS, TX – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Ness' Viking Maiden, Sweet Tea, Honeylove; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Rob's Boogie Woogie; Best Standard: Ness' Viking Maiden; Best Design, **Allene Peek.** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Ness' Sheer Peach, Optimara Little Arapahoe, Rob's Kitten Caboodle; Best Trailer: Teenie Bopper; Best Species: *Saintpaulia rupicola*; Best Gesneriad: *Chirita* USBRG-98-083; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Gail Elmore.** Design Sweepstakes, **Mary Smith.**

FIRST LAKELAND AVS, FL – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Graffiti, Kaylih Marie, Dignitaire; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Ness' Crinkle Blue, Jolly Magic, Teen Thunder; Best in Show/Best Standard: Heinz's Imagine; Best Semiminiature: Ness' Crinkle Blue; Best Miniature: Dean's Rosalie; Horticulture Sweepstakes; **Christel Collier.** Best Trailer: Rob's Gundaroo; Best Species: *Saintpaulia ionantha* subspecies *pendula*, **Carol Ann Burrell.** Best Gesneriad: *Chiritopsis reparda* var. *guilinensis*; Design Sweepstakes, **Kelly Ates.** Best Design, **Eryth Hendershot.**

GARDEN STATE AVC, PA – Winners: Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Lyon's Little Sweetheart; Best Miniature: Mac's Black Jack; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Clyde**

Ashton. Best Standard: Optimara EverJoy; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Luanne Arico.** Best Species: *Saintpaulia ionantha* subspecies *ionantha* var. *ionantha*, **Fred Hill.** Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Gloria', **Marika Demeter.**

LAKESHORE AVS, ONTARIO – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: *Saintpaulia* clone *ionantha, Saintpaulia* clone *tongwensis, Saintpaulia* clone *rupicola*; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Norton's Elaine, Rob's Fuddy Duddy, Plumberry Glow; Best Semiminiature: Ness' Cranberry Swirl; Best Trailer: Beacon Trail; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* clone *ionantha*; Best Gesneriad: *Chirita* 'Destiny', **Beverley Williams.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler, Pink Sensation, Lonestar Lady; 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Ooey Gooey, Rob's Combustible Pigeon, Optimara Little Aztec; Best in Show/Best Standard: Therese; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Tony Hulleman.** Best Miniature: Pink Dove, **Brett Flewelling.** Best Design, **Ursula Eley.** Design Sweepstakes, **Marina DeSouza.**

LONG ISLAND AVS, NY – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Opera's Romeo, Rebel's Restless Heart, Winter Ice; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Pewter Bells, Snuggles, Ness' Sno Fun; Best in Show: Winter Ice; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Lois Szostak.** Best Species: *Saintpaulia rupicola* Mather; Best Gesneriad: *Chirita sinensis*, **Dorothy Vogt.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Enchanted April, Red Lion, Lela Marie, **Marie Schnaufer.** Best Semiminiature: Cool Blue; Best Design, **Rosemary Macaluso.** Best Miniature: Little Darlin'; Design Sweepstakes, **Diane Lohan.** Best Trailer: Pixie Trail, **Jeanne Maier.**

MAGIC KNIGHT AVS, TX – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Vintage Wine, EK-Snezhnyi Bars, Neon Fireflier; Best Species Collection: *Saintpaulia ionantha* subspecies *ionantha* var. *ionantha, Saintpaulia ionantha* subspecies *orbicularis; Saintpaulia ionantha* subspecies *grotei*; Best Semiminiature: Thunder Surprise; Best Miniature: Jolly Orchid, **Danny Tidwell.** 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Honey Blue Ace, Shirl's Hawaiian Lei, Jolly Orchid, **Ken Froboese.** Best Standard: Lonestar Lady; Best Gesneriad: *Chirita sinensis* 'Hisako', **Irene Harney.** Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Jane Rexilius.**

MONTROSE AND BURBANK AVS, CA – Winners: Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Slap Happy, Rob's Squeeze Toy, Rob's Mad Cat; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Slap Happy; Best Miniature: Orchard's Bumble Magnet; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Chris Hedberg.** Best in Show/Best Standard: Harmony's Little Stinker, **Bernadine Poulsen.** Best Trailer: Teeny Bopper; Best Species: *Saintpaulia ionantha* subspecies *ionantha* var. *ionantha*, **Luis Pineda.** Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Bristol's Party Girl', **Hanna Olsen.** Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Leslie Cox.**

NAUGATONIC AVS, CT – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Rhapsodie Juliana, Rhapsodie Betty, Rhapsodie Rebecca; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Ness' Sno Fun, Cupid's Jewel, Crimson Magic; Best in Show/Best Trailer: Ellie Gardner; Best Standard: Rhapsodie Betty; Best Miniature: Lil Periscope; Best Gesneriad: *Columnea* 'Cascading Beauty'; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Edna Rourke.** Best Semiminiature: Lil Glimpse o' Spring, **Donald Goodwin.**

QUAD CITIES AVS, IL – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Optical Illusion, Dixie's Angel Kisses, Optimara EverGrace; Best Species Collection: *Saintpaulia ionantha* subspecies *grandifolia, Saintpaulia ionantha* var. *diplotricha, Saintpaulia ionantha* subspecies *grotei*; Best Miniature: Jolly Gala; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Judi DuPont.** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Winnergreen, Rob's Boogie Woogie, Rob's Outer Orbit; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Winnergreen; Best Standard: Optimara EverGrace; Best Trailer: Milky Way Trail, **LuAnn Christenson.** 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Slow Dancin', Ness' Sno Fun, Ness' Crinkle Blue; Best Species: *Saintpaulia rupicola*, **John Jugenheimer.** Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Dale's Scarlet Macaw', **Dale Martens.** Best Design, **Susan Massick.** Design Sweepstakes (tie), **LuAnn Christenson and Susan Massick.**

QUAD CITIES AVS, IL (2008) – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Deep Sky, Hot Tamales, Ma's Watermelon; Best Semiminiature: Cool Teen, **Sue Schinckel.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Optimara Molokai, Optimara EverGrace, Ultra Violet Billy, **Carol Boyd.** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Thunder Surprise, Rob's Gizmo, Ness' Crinkle Blue; Best Miniature: Frosted Denim, **LuAnn Christenson.** 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Ness' Crinkle Blue, Rob's Cool Fruit, Slow Dancin'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **John Jugenheimer.** Best in Show/Best Standard: Heartland's Lime Sherbet; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Different Drummer', **Dale Martens.** Best Trailer/Best Species: *Saintpaulia ionantha*, **Judi DuPont.**

RICHMOND AVS, VA – Winners: Best in Show/Best Standard: Taffeta Blue, **Harry Livesay.** Best Semiminiature: Rebel's Meg; Best Miniature: Optimara Little Moonstone; Best Trailer: Pixie Blue, **Nell Reese.** Best Species: *Saintpaulia ionantha* subspecies *velutina*, **Carolyn Smith.** Best Gesneriad: *Columnea hirta* 'Light Prince', **Kathryn Hedgepeth.** Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Barbara Stewart.** Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Josane Wagner.**

SOCIETE DES SAINTPAULIA DE MONTREAL QUEBEC – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Blue Mink, Frozen in Time, Funambule; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Ness' Cranberry Swirl, Rob's Dandy Lion, Rob's Pewter Bells; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Dandy Lion; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Annie Simard.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Winter Ice, Ma's Pillow Talk, Frozen in Time; 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Dust Storm, Rob's Match Point, Cool Blue, **Marie Gagnon.** Best in Show/Best Standard: Marching Band, **Clement Perreault.** Best Trailer/Best Species: *Saintpaulia rupicola*, **Diane Taillon.**

Best Gesneriad: *Kohleria hirsuta* 'Trinidad', **Monique Beaucage.** Design Sweepstakes,**Johanne Burdeleau.**

SUNDOWNERS AVS, LA – Winners: Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Boogie Woogie, Rob's Outer Orbit, Rob's Suicidal Squirrel; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Rob's Boogie Woogie; Best Standard: Granger's Wonderland; Best Miniature: Rob's Cloudy Skies: Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Bristol's 5th Element'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Laura Moser.** 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Precious Pink, Definitely Darryl, Cool Teen; Best Trailer: Pixie Blue, **Belinda Thibodeaux.** Best Species: *Saintpaulia grotei*, **George Ramirez.** Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Elmer Godeny.**

SWEET WATER AVS, NY – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Blushing Ivory, Wild Irish Rose, Rebel's Minnesota Haze; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Lucky Ladybug; Best Standard: Optimara Ontario; Design Sweepstakes, **Carolyn Klein.** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Cool Blue, Rob's Mad Cat, Aca's Daphne; Best Gesneriad: *Chirita* 'Vertigo', **Esperanza Kesler.** Best Miniature: Optimara Little Diamond, **Marilyn Heinrich.** Best Trailer: Rolling Pink Cloudburst; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* subspecies *pendula*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Joyce Rodler.** Best Design, **Jeanne Damaso.**

TRI-COUNTIES AVS, CA – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: The Alps, Frozen in Time, Ness' Coral Sunset, **Dorothy Kosowsky.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Royal Rage, Apache Diamond, Optimara Molokai; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Suicidal Squirrel, Rob's Inner Orbit, Joy's Pink Halo; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Rob's Suicidal Squirrel; Best Miniature: Jolly Jubilee; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Diane Miller.** Best Standard: Fisherman's Paradise, **Vivien Mitchell.** Best Trailer: Tiny Wood Trail, **Ralph Cox.** Best Species: *Saintpaulia tongwensis*, **Nancy DiPaola.** Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Lavender Rosette'; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Leonard Re.**

UNPREDICTABLE AVS, MO – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Rainbow's Limelight, Ness' White Bear, Rhapsodie Katja; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Love Bite, Rob's Twinkle Pink, Frosted Denim; Best Semiminiature: Winnergreen; Best Miniature: Rob's Twinkle Pink; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Bristol's Nose Print'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Pat Inbody.** Best in Show/Best Trailer: Linda Darnell, **Dick Faris.** Best Standard: Ness' Bangle Blue, **Sue Hill.** Best Species: *Saintpaulia grandifolia #299* clone; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Linda Golubski.**

WINDSOR AVS, NY – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: B-Man's Melila, Nancy Reagan, Optimara Molokai; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Boogie Woogie, Rob's Cool Fruit, Rob's Calypso Beat; Best in Show/Best Standard: B-Man's Melila; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Boogie Woogie; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Charlotte Howson.** Best Miniature: Jolly Joy, **Nancy Hayes.** Best Gesneriad: *Alsobia dianthiflora*, **Cindy Fagan.** Best Design, **Joyce Dickey.** Design Sweepstakes, **Marcia Kilpatrick.**

Anne & Frank Tinari Endowment Fund

Janet Riemer • 256 Pennington-Harbourton Rd. • Pennington, NJ 08534

April 20, 2009 – June 9, 2009

Geneva

Rocky Mountain African Violet Council

Multicolor

Central Jersey African Violet Society
(in memory of Charlotte Lynn)
Marge Farrand
Nancy G. Hayes
(in honor of Stampede African Violet Society)
Nancy G. Hayes
(in memory of Linda Owens' father)
African Violet Society of Greater Tulsa
(in honor of Judith M. Carter, President)

Two-tone

Linda Wheaton
Seattle African Violet Society
Don Geiss
(in memory of Chuck Callentine)

Thumbprint

Bergen County African Violet Society (NJ)
(in lieu of judging expenses for Laurel Brown)
Alice A. Inlow
Susan Arnao
Nancy DiPaola
Joyce Martins
Patricia Miklica
Irene Schubert
Charlotte Rosengrant
Janice Sorensen

Total this period - $502

PREPARE TO OVER-WINTER TUBERS & RHIZOMES

By Marge Huntley

Tuber - A woody food and water-storage root, very hard, round, and almost indestructible.

Rhizome - A specialized portion of the root which carries the plant through dormancy.

Gesneriad rhizomes are elongated, scaly, and vary in thickness according to the plant species. *Sinningia* is the most commonly grown tuberous plant. Florist's *Gloxinia* is really *Sinningia speciosa* and has a sturdy tuber. Many of these have been discarded by buyers who think their plant has died, when it has simply gone into dormancy. Rhizomatous plants include *Achimenes, Diastema, Eucodonia, Gloxinia* (the real one), *Kohleria,* and *Pearcea.*

Tuberous plants

These get very shabby after flowering and should be taken off wick-watering so that you can gradually lessen the amount of water given. Trim off all dead foliage, leaving the balance to die off in its own time. Leave a good stub when foliage is eventually trimmed. This seems to prevent the tuber from becoming "blind" and refusing to sprout. Over-wintering tuberous and rhizomatous plants should not be allowed to become bone dry, but should be given a little water.

In a couple of months, new growth will show on the tuber and now is time to re-pot. The above holds for all *Sinningia* except the tiny *S.pusilla*, White Sprite etc. They do not die down but should be repotted at least once a year. Keep spent stems trimmed.

Rhizomatous plants.

During growth and flowering, there will be very few, if any, rhizomes in the potting mix. They develop when flowering has ceased and the foliage starts to become shabby. Nature steps in, producing rhizomes to enable the species to continue. We can help this rhizome development by stressing the plants a little by reducing water. Remove from reservoirs, water occasionally till all growth has died. Trim (no need for stubs). Rhizomes can be stored in their pot of soil but need a little water to prevent the dry soil from desiccating the rhizomes. Or, rhizomes can be harvested and stored in barely damp vermiculite in a labeled plastic bag. As rhizomes show their first growth (easier to see if out of a pot), they should be planted. Some have a shorter dormancy time than others.

Moon Signs and Planting Guide

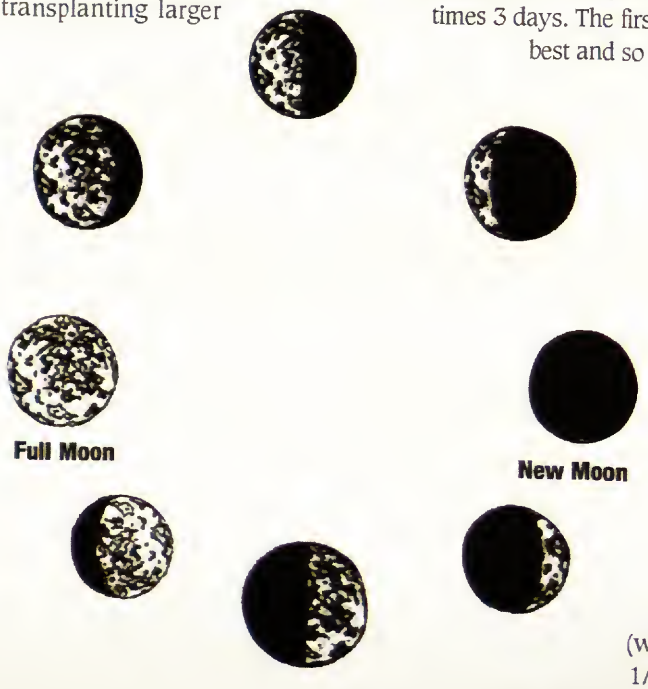
Follow the Moon Signs for putting down leaves and suckers, planting baby plants, transplanting larger plants and killing pests.

The "water" signs are the most fruitful.

CANCER rules growth and promotes healthy, fast growing plants. SCORPIO rules the sexual and reproductive organs of plants. Plant and transplant vines and trailers. PISCES rules water-seeking in the root system and helps develop a good root system. For best results, use 1st and 2nd quarters of the Moon. Bulbs, root crops, and vines do best when planted in the 3rd Quarter of the Moon.

The "earth" signs are semi-fruitful.

TAURUS, LIBRA, and CAPRICORN: Good times to plant and transplant.



Moon signs usually run in 2 1/2 day cycles, and sometimes 3 days. The first day the Moon is in a sign is the best and so on, down the length of the cycle.

The "air" signs are barren.

AQUARIUS, GEMINI, and VIRGO: Destroy pests and suckers when the Moon is in the 4th Quarter.

The "fire" signs and are the most barren.

ARIES, LEO, AND SAGITTARIUS: These signs are the best to kill pests, especially when the Moon is in the 4th Quarter.

MOON PHASES

The Moon grows progressively larger (waxes) and smaller (wanes) through approximately 29 1/2 days (the "lunation cycle) as a result of a relationship between the Sun, Moon, and the Earth.

Planting by Moon Signs

All tables use Eastern Time. Please calculate the difference between your time zone and Eastern.

Moon in Aries

Barren and dry, fiery and masculine. Used for destroying noxious growths, weeds, pests, etc., and for cultivating.

Moon in Taurus

Productive and moist, earthy and feminine. Used for planting many crops, particularly potatoes and root crops, and when hardiness is important. Also used for lettuce, cabbage, and similar leafy vegetables.

Moon in Gemini

Barren and dry, airy and masculine. Used for destroying noxious growths, weeds and pests, and for cultivation.

Moon in Cancer

Very fruitful and moist, watery and feminine. This is the most productive sign; used extensively for planting and irrigation.

Moon in Leo

Barren and dry, fiery and masculine. This is the most barren sign, used only for killing weeds and for cultivation.

Moon in Virgo

Barren and moist, earthy and feminine. Good for cultivation and destroying weeds and pests.

Moon in Libra

Semi-fruitful and moist, airy and masculine. Used for planting many crops and producing good pulp growth and roots. A very good sign for flowers and vines. Also used for seeding hay, corn fodder, etc.

Moon in Scorpio

Very fruitful and moist, watery and feminine. Nearly as productive as Cancer; used for the same purposes. Especially good for vine growth and sturdiness.

Moon in Sagittarius

Barren and dry, fiery and masculine. Used for planting onions, seeding hay, and for cultivation.

Moon in Capricorn

Productive and dry, earthy and feminine. Used for planting potatoes, tubers, etc.

Moon in Aquarius

Barren and dry, airy and masculine. Used for cultivation and destroying noxious growths, weeds, and pests.

Moon in Pisces

Very fruitful and moist, watery and feminine. Used along with Cancer and Scorpio, especially good for root growth.

September Moon Table

Date	Sign	Element	Nature	Phase	
1 Tue	Aquarius	Air	Barren	2nd	
2 Wed	Aquarius	Air	Barren	2nd	
3 Thu	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	2nd	1:58 am
4 Fri	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	3rd	12:02 pm
5 Sat	Aries	Fire	Barren	3rd	10:14 pm
6 Sun	Aries	Fire	Barren	3rd	
7 Mon	Aries	Fire	Barren	3rd	
8 Tue	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	3rd	6:17 am
9 Wed	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	3rd	
10 Thu	Gemini	Air	Barren	3rd	12:17 pm
11 Fri	Gemini	Air	Barren	4th	10:16 pm
12 Sat	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	4th	4:19 pm
13 Sun	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	4th	
14 Mon	Leo	Fire	Barren	4th	6:39 pm
15 Tue	Leo	Fire	Barren	4th	
16 Wed	Virgo	Earth	Barren	4th	7:56 pm
17 Thu	Virgo	Earth	Barren	4th	
18 Fri	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	1st	9:26 pm
19 Sat	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	1st	2:44 pm
20 Sun	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	1st	
21 Mon	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	1st	12:52 am
22 Tue	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	1st	
23 Wed	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	1st	7:43 am
24 Thu	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	1st	
25 Fri	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	1st	6:19 pm
26 Sat	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	2nd	12:50 am
27 Sun	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	2nd	
28 Mon	Aquarius	Air	Barren	2nd	7:06 am
29 Tue	Aquarius	Air	Barren	2nd	
30 Wed	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	2nd	7:26 pm

October Moon Table

Date	Sign	Element	Nature	Phase	
1 Thu	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	2nd	
2 Fri	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	2nd	
3 Sat	Aries	Fire	Barren	2nd	5:20 am
4 Sun	Aries	Fire	Barren	3rd	2:10 am
5 Mon	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	3rd	12:33 pm
6 Tue	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	3rd	
7 Wed	Gemini	Air	Barren	3rd	5:46 pm
8 Thu	Gemini	Air	Barren	3rd	
9 Fri	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	3rd	9:48 pm
10 Sat	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	3rd	
11 Sun	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	4th	4:56 am
12 Mon	Leo	Fire	Barren	4th	1:02 am
13 Tue	Leo	Fire	Barren	4th	
14 Wed	Virgo	Earth	Barren	4th	3:45 am
15 Thu	Virgo	Earth	Barren	4th	
16 Fri	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	4th	6:29 am
17 Sat	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	4th	
18 Sun	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	1st	10:22 am
19 Mon	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	1st	1:33 am
20 Tue	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	1st	4:49 pm
21 Wed	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	1st	
22 Thu	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	1st	
23 Fri	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	1st	2:39 am
24 Sat	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	1st	
25 Sun	Aquarius	Air	Barren	2nd	3:08 pm
26 Mon	Aquarius	Air	Barren	2nd	8:42 pm
27 Tue	Aquarius	Air	Barren	2nd	
28 Wed	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	2nd	3:45 am
29 Thu	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	2nd	
30 Fri	Aries	Fire	Barren	2nd	1:56 pm
31 Sat	Aries	Fire	Barren	2nd	

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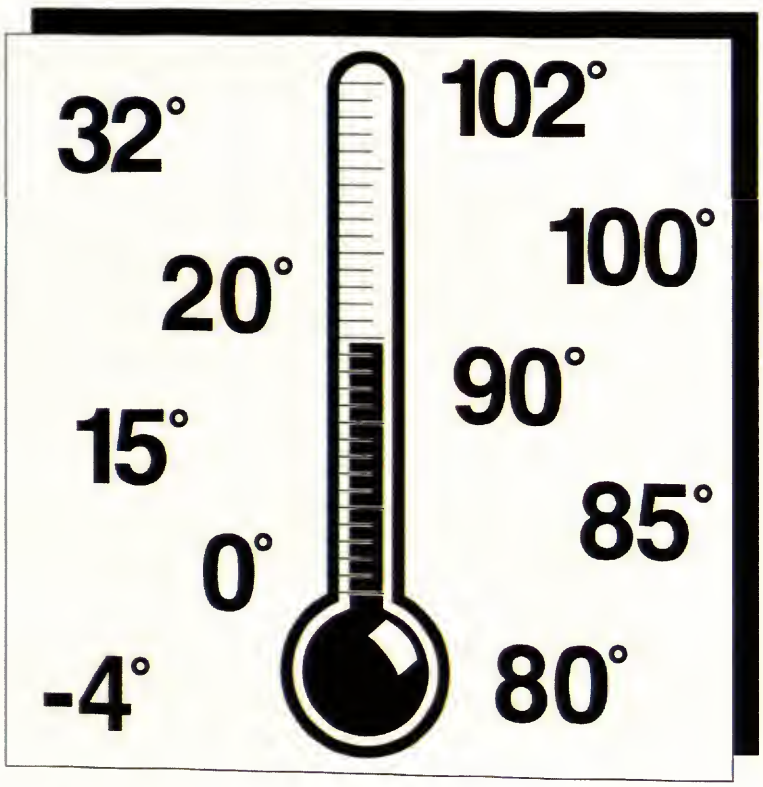
Temperatures

By Stan Sudol

Gesneriads are a versatile family of plants. Some prefer warmer temperatures and some prefer cooler, but usually it is different genera and specie. Most can tolerate a reasonable departure from their preferred range of temperature.

Humans and many animals have preferences as well. Some of us like it warmer and some colder, and in some cases a change is necessary due to health conditions. This affects our relationship with our house plants, and they sulk or will not bloom, or go into hibernation, perhaps even die.

I have a preference, and that is warmer. In the winter season, during the daytime the thermostat is set at 73°F (23° C) and at 68°F (20°C) at night. However, there have been a couple of nights that I got up from under the covers and upped it to 72°F (22° C) for the rest of the night. In the summer, the day temp is 79°F (26° C) and the night is 82°F (28° C). This is mainly due to the higher humidity. It is also higher in the summer due to the cost of running the air conditioner.



I have two growing areas. One light stand is in the kitchen and receives any benefits of extra heat and humidity from the cooking environment, although this may not be a big issue as I grow most of my plants under large plastic domes. The other light stand is in a basement that does not get much benefit from my thermostat manipulations, as the vents are turned very low and it gets quite cool in the winter, about 59°F (15° C) at night. Plants such as *episcias* have succumbed to these conditions.

I was quite surprised at some individuals' growing conditions as discussed on Gesneriphiles Internet Group, with their homes set at 55° F (13° C). I know that some of our members have told us they keep their temperature quite low as well. If they can cope with it personally and the plants are also happy, great.

Last March, I purchased an *Aeschynanthus* plant from my local fruit market. It was in a ten-inch hanging basket and was full of dark red flowers and packed with stems. It seemed just too nice to pass up. I had it in the house for several days before I noticed white puffy things all over it, noticeably in the leaf axils. I guess they were mealie bugs, by the hundreds. I made a fast decision; outside with you all!

Well, this was only the end of March. I thought that temperatures and exposure would probably do it in. I envisioned a pile of white fluff sitting below the plant. I placed it on a hanging basket bracket, fully exposed to nature, facing a westerly direction and left it to its own resources.

During the period from March to May, we had snow, cold winds, rain, sunshine, and temperatures below what I expected the plant to survive. Most of the flowers fell off, but occasionally, I would see a few new flowers come up. Out of pity, I did water it, hoping its demise would be less painful. I think I even turned it a couple of times.

As our summer season emerged, it bloomed non stop. I kept it away from the other plants that I summer outdoors, as it still showed the fluffy mealy bugs. I tried various treatments, and all failed to eradicate the pests.

It was the last plant I brought in from the outdoors late in the fall, as temperatures plummeted to below freezing temperatures. It sat in the kitchen for three days, and all the leaves and flowers fell off. It was a bit of a miracle that it survived at all at the beginning. I gave it to our recycle bin.

There is a moral to this story. It liked the cold spring outdoors, it liked the heat of the summer outdoors, and even when other plants were brought in as the cool fall started, it liked it until I forced it in when a hard frost was imminent. It did not like my kitchen!

Toronto Gesneriad Society Newsletter

The Once and Future Violet in Raleigh, NC

By Tom Glembocki

The 64th Annual AVSA Convention and Show will take place from April 11 to April 18 at the Hilton North Raleigh, in Raleigh, NC. April is a perfect time to vacation in the Carolinas. If you're planning to drive to *The Once and Future Violet,* or fly, you should plan to come early to take advantage the beauty of spring in the area.

Dogwoods in bloom on 4/11/09. "The Once and Future Violet" begins on this same day in 2010.

Our convention has been scheduled to occur at the peak of the Carolina spring blooming season. The azaleas and the dogwoods will be in full bloom, and the shirt-sleeve weather will allow you to enjoy being out of doors. Make sure you come early in the week to take advantage of tours highlighting the natural beauty of this area. (In order to document the progress of spring for the 2010 convention, I took photographs outdoors on April 11, 2009 - the exact date the convention will begin in 2010.)

Plan to time your trip to take advantage of the convention tours. We will be visiting Juniper Level Botanic Gardens, the home of Plant Delights Nursery. The Nursery is not open to the public, but we will be able to go behind the scenes to observe hybridization and research by owner Tony Avent and his staff. Plant Delights is strictly a perennial nursery with the motto "Friends don't allow friends to plant annuals."

For foodies, we're planning a night out to The Pit Barbecue Restaurant in downtown Raleigh. Pitmaster Ed Wilson is a celebrity chef, regularly featured on the Food Channel, Good Morning America, and the Today Show. The Pit is going to accommodate our AVSA group in a reserved area of the restaurant on Tuesday night April 13.

Dogwood blooms at the peak of their display, azaleas in a multitude of colors, accompanied by flowering bulbs of all varieties - tulips, daffodils, and hyacinths - where are we? It must be Duke Gardens, one of the top ten horticultural gardens in the US according to *Southern Living Magazine*. We have planned a full day at Duke, with a docent-led tour of these beautiful gardens, the historic Duke Homestead, where George Washington Duke got his start, and the Cathedral-like Duke chapel, icon of the University.

Azaleas in bloom.

On another tour date, we'll be visiting the JC Ralston Arboretum in Raleigh. The Ralston is more of a University Research station with field trials of various flowering annuals, trees, and shrubs. Demonstration gardens complement the trial gardens, showing how plants can be used in a home landscape.

Seagrove, North Carolina, is home to almost 200 pottery studios. We are scheduling a tour of the Seagrove area with stops at a handful of studios and pottery shops.

A trip to the state capitol of North Carolina would not be complete without a trip to downtown and the capitol government complex. Heading downtown, we will travel through dogwood and azalea-lined streets of beautiful Victorian homes. Once again, because it will be the peak of spring, our tour of the Capitol building and the Governor's Mansion will be a florific treat. The grounds surrounding the Mansion could qualify for their own place on lists of botanical gardens.

The formal gardens at Duke Gardens one of the Top Ten horticultural gardens in the United States.

One of our more unique tours will be a visit to the Hall of King Richard. Of course, "The King" is none other than Richard Petty, and the Richard Petty Museum is sure to invoke the car racing bug in all of us. If racing is not for you, Lynda Owens Petty, wife of Richard, is an avid doll collector. Her collection of almost 1,000 antique, modern, and rare dolls occupies a corner of the museum. In addition to the historic Petty race cars, trophies, and racing related paraphernalia, Richard was a collector of pocket watches, rifles, pistols, knives, and other interesting objects.

Please come early, and enjoy the surrounding area before getting down to business for the 64th Annual AVSA Convention. See you in Raleigh!

Capillary Matting

Capillary mats are not new, but they are causing a great stir in the horticultural world today. Many of us in the New York chapter are now "on the mats" and thrilled with our success. Marty Mines, our unofficial mat expert, has prepared these questions and answers about the capillary mats. We encourage you to try.

What is mat watering?

Plant pots are placed on a non-woven matting which is kept moist. By the weight of the pot and its contents, the soil mix makes contact with the moist mat and absorbs the moisture it needs.

What are its advantages?

There is an appreciable savings in time -- your plants need not be individually watered, just water the mat. There is also a humidity increase around your plants from the moist mat. In mat watering, the potting mix becomes lightly and uniformly watered. Gesneriads, most begonias, and many other house plants grow and bloom as you have never seen them before. African violets do very well, and the danger of leaf spotting is eliminated.

How are the mats contained?

If your plants are in trays, the mats can be cut to the size of your tray and positioned at the bottom. The felt-like side of the mat should be uppermost so the pots can sink slightly into its surface.

How is the mat watered – how much, how often?

Add enough water to the mat in the tray to make it uniformly moist. Avoid standing puddles if you can, but even a thin layer of standing water for a short period of time seems to have no harmful effect. Some users keep the mat fairly moist all the time; others permit the mat to get quite dry between waterings.

You can develop your own "feel" for the permissible dryness of your mat by watching your plants for signs of wilting or by lifting a test pot to heft the weight and so note the need for water.

When my mats are dry, I add three quarts of water to each of my large trays, thus watering my plants for another few days. However, this amount of water may be different at other times, depending on temperature, humidity, and the load of plants. Plants take the amount of water they require. If you are using a mat on a plastic protective sheet (i.e. without benefit of a tray to contain the water) it is best to have the end of the mat in a water reservoir. The reservoir should not be so low that water will have to climb a considerable vertical distance, nor should it be so high as to allow the water to "siphon" into your growing area. The water will, through capillary action, move along the mat into your growing area, and thence through the soil in your pots to the roots of the plants.

What potting mix works best?

A loose porous mix is best -- either soil or soilless. A loose mix has many large air spaces. The water absorbed at the bottom rises by capillary action in and around the particles that are adjacent to and touching each other. The larger and wider air spaces are not filled with the water -- thus the roots have both the water and the air they need.

If the mix contains small fine clay particles, the water rising by capillary action will fill all the space, air spaces as well, and the roots will lack oxygen and may rot.

All mixes made for gesneriads are loose and porous and will work well on mats. My soilless mix of one part vermiculite, one part perlite, and two parts sphagnum peat works beautifully. It is always lightly and uniformly moist. Before placing new plants on the mat, inspect and remove crock and pebbles that may be found at the bottom of the pot.

Are there any special techniques that have been developed with mat watering?

A sure method of reproducing a plant is to place a tip cutting in your porous potting mix, in a 2 1/2" pot, and place a plastic sandwich bag over the pot, sealing it with a rubber band. The bottom of the pot is not covered by the plastic bag and sits as usual on the mat. Water slightly from the top to settle the mix around the cutting before enclosing with the plastic bag. After 2-3 weeks, or when you notice that the cutting has started to grow, cut off the top of the plastic bag with scissors. This reduces humidity inside the bag and permits the rooted cutting to start adjusting to normal outside humidity. After a week or two more, remove the remains of the plastic bag.

When using propagation boxes (such as shoe boxes and freezer dishes), I make a few holes in the underside of the box and then treat it as if it was a pot. I fill with my usual propagation mix and whatever plant material I wish, and then cover it with either a lid or polyethylene. I leave the bottom uncovered and on the matting. Sufficient water will be absorbed by capillary action to maintain optimum moisture.

Do plants have to be watered from the top to start capillary action?

I water my pots from the top the first time to wash down the mix so that it makes close contact to the mat, through the pot drain holes. Establishing or re-establishing capillary

action does not seem necessary, even after the mat has almost dried out. When the mat is moistened, the surface tension of the water to the pot pulls the water up into the pot where it meets some of the mix and starts its further rise in the pot.

What pots works best?

I have worked with 1" to 6" pots, although mostly with 2 1/2" pots. I have had heavily blooming plants in 6" pots, repotted by steps from 2 1/2" pots, and never watered from the top. Almost all my experience has been with plastic pots. The small projections found at the bottom of most plastic pots do not seem to interfere with absorption. Some clay pots have worked well for me. In other cases, I thought I detected wilting and presumed it was from excessive moisture loss through the sides of the pot. I put a plug of sphagnum moss in the pot's drain hole to increase and water intake, and the wilting usually vanishes.

How about fertilizing?

I add my fertilizer to the water every time I water the mat. I use 1/8 teaspoon per gallon of a complete 18-18-18 fertilizer. Other mat users, I have heard, are using slow-release fertilizers in their potting mix or are adding a heavier fertilizer concentration to the mat water but are doing this at intervals rather than at each watering.

How about accumulation of algae and insects?

After a period of use, algae may develop on the surface of the mat. This will be more likely if fertilizer has been used to excess. With the algae and bits of organic debris accumulations may come springtails. If algae build-up occurs (it may after 2-3 months use of my mats) I remove pots from the mat and place the mat in a pail containing a bit of Tide and a half cup of Clorox. After a half-hour soak, I rinse a few times to get rid of the remnants of Clorox and the mat is clean, algae-free, and ready for reuse (I've just thrown it in the washer with detergent and bleach and it has come out fine – Ron Myhr).

Before I replace the pots I lightly sprinkle both sides of the mat with a systemic insecticide, such as Isotox systemic granules.

Best procedures are preventative. Quick algae growth indicates over-fertilization. Reduce the amount of fertilizer. Keep matting clear of fallen bloom and potting mix. Be cautious about using insecticides which are sold to be applied as sprays, as an additive to mat water. Some which are excellent as sprays will cause fatal injury to some plant species if added in the recommended spray strength to the water used to moisten the mats. Use only those systemic insecticides designed to be placed in the potting mix, on the mat, or as additives to the water.

How about salt accumulations at the surface of the pot?

This is inherent in the capillary method and cannot be avoided. After two years of experience, however, I have rarely had a plant that seems to be affected by surface salt build-up. When I do find build-up, I leach with tepid water, about five times the pot's volume, and then replace the pot on the mat.

Toronto Gesneriad Society Newsletter. Reprinted from the TGS newsletter Vol. 7 No. 4 April 1983. Originally published in the Glox News, newsletter of the Greater New York chapter.

AVSA 2010 Convention
Raleigh, North Carolina
April 11 - April 18, 2010

In Memory
Joy Phillips

Joy Phillips, Charter Member of the African Violet Club of Morris County, New Jersey, passed away in February 2009. She was 91 years of age. Joy was a short story writer and was active in her church and community. She was an avid gardener and grower of African violets. She and her wonderful desserts will be missed by all the club members.

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Rob's Zoot Suit

From 2nd Best Robinson Collection

2009 AVSA National Show

Exhibited by: ***Andrea Worrell***

Hybridized by: ***R. Robinson***

Semiminiature

Rosy Cheeks

Exhibited by: ***Lorna Russell***

Hybridized by: ***Sorano/Lyon Greenhouses***

Semiminiature

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Texas Space Dust

Exhibited by: ***Richard Nicholas***

Hybridized by: ***H. Pittman***

Miniature

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

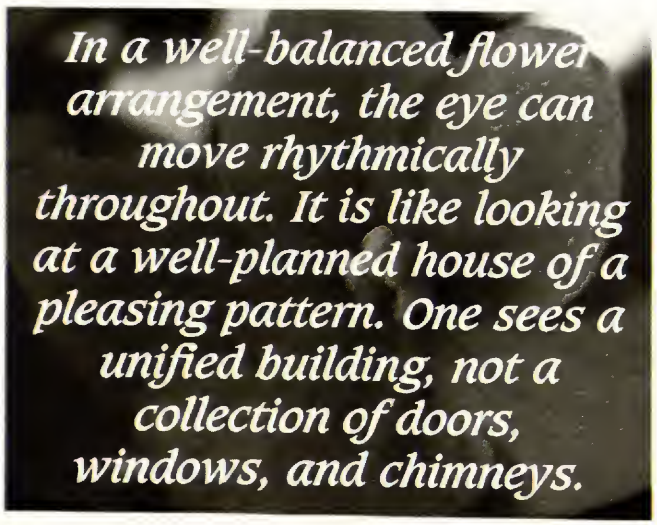
FLORAL DESIGN - AN ART

By Ray Lange

Composing a beautiful picture is an art. Whether you choose stone, brick, or living materials, such as flowers and foliage, the art must be learned before your picture can be successful. Creating a flower arrangement is not like making a cake, using a well-used and tested recipe. One must use imagination and creativity rather than being technically perfect.

There is a way of making people feel at home when they begin to learn a new art. A close relationship exists among all the arts which helps accomplish this attitude. Almost everyone has had some knowledge of the art of musical composition, the dance, painting, interior decorating, landscape designing, and the art of cooking.

We need to feel at home with the art of designing with plants and flowers. You would not expect to know all about musical composition in five easy lessons, nor would expect to understand all there is to know about painting without many lessons and lots of practice. So, don't be discouraged if you are not an expert flower designer after you read a few books and enter a few flower shows. Have no feeling of inferiority because you are not able to create beautiful designs with flowers instinctively. This is an art that requires study and practice.


In a well-balanced flower arrangement, the eye can move rhythmically throughout. It is like looking at a well-planned house of a pleasing pattern. One sees a unified building, not a collection of doors, windows, and chimneys.

THE MECHANICS OF THE ART - Let us begin at the most logical place to start - the beginning. To have command of the art of flower arranging you must be somewhat of an inventor, an engineer, and a mechanic. You must be inventive because there is no limit of ideas for design. To achieve a proper foundation for your arrangement you must have the right tools and you must know how to use them.

Today, we have a good choice of mechanics to help us. One of the most popular is the pin holder. It comes in various sizes and prices. Floral clay is used to anchor the holder in a dish or container. Fine sharp flower shears, or small pruning clippers, a small bundle of wire in different gauges, a roll of scotch tape, green florist tape, glass or plastic tubes, floral sticks...and you are ready to tackle almost any design problem.

Crushed chicken wire is quite popular with some flower arrangers. It is usually bunched in a mass and stuffed into a deep receptacle that has a wide opening at the top. The only disadvantage with this method is that the wire tends to crush the stems.

Oasis is a substance that professional florists use because it absorbs water like a sponge and supports the flower stems when wet. It is light in weight and clean - a good way to transport arranged flowers.

Marbles, pebbles, shells, granite pieces, and coal can be used effectively, not only to hold stems in glass containers, but also as a camouflage to conceal the pin holders or wire netting. They come in many colors so you can greatly enhance the beauty of your design.

CONTAINERS - By the term container, we mean anything capable of holding flowers, foliage, and associated materials in water. Much care be taken in selecting a suitable container for an arrangement. There are many containers from which the flower designer, may choose. Take a look in your cupboard. Pottery, china, and porcelain are good choices. Simple forms and solid color glazes are best for the floral design. Containers of copper and pewter are two fine metals for arranging. The Japanese and Chinese consider the flower container as the earth from which plants and flowers grow and for this reason make extensive use of bronze.

A great variety of glass containers give the flower arranger a wonderful assortment of textures and colors. Alabaster and milk glass can be used much like white porcelain or pottery. If you have clear glass containers, you need not throw them away. Try brushing them with a light coating of emulsion paint using a pastel color.

There are not too many pitfalls in selecting a container for floral design. The container should have good basic form without too many fussy variations. Clean simple lines are best, especially for the novice designer.

Whatever type of container you use, whether it be simple or elaborate, conventional or unorthodox, keep the following points in mind:

- Plan your entire composition beginning with the container.
- Visualize in your mind's eye what you intend to do, and then do it.
- Do not be afraid to try out new ideas.

- Employ your knowledge of the mechanics and principles of flower arranging.
- Relax and be creative.

Now we are faced with a vase, some flowers, and some foliage. What are you going to do? Just put all the materials into the container, not troubling to attempt anything more than making sure the stems touch the bottom so that the flowers have a drink? No architect ever built a house that way!

In a well-balanced flower arrangement, the eye can move rhythmically throughout. It is like looking at a well-planned house of a pleasing pattern. One sees a unified building, not a collection of doors, windows, and chimneys.

If you have assembled all of your necessary tools, physically as well as mentally, you are now ready to begin the exciting experience of building your first truly creative flower arrangement. There are five basic, practical rules which govern all flower arranging which I will briefly discuss.

1. Measure your container. You are required to know its greatest diameter if the container is long or round; its greatest height if it is tall. This measurement, plus half again, is the minimum visual measurement for your main stem and the height of your flower arrangement.
2. Centralize the stems. Every stem must spring from the center of your composition, from its focal point, or you will not achieve a sense of unity. Keep a picture of how all the spokes spring from the hub of a wheel.
3. Vary your stem lengths. Cut them in such a way that no major materials stand shoulder to shoulder or directly above each other, thereby forming a straight line.
4. Avoid crossed stems. Avoid crossing stems where they are visible. There are exceptions to this rule, but on the whole, when crossing of stems does occur, it should be under the water level of the container.
5. Let the flowers and foliage embrace your container. This rule is very important, because flower arranging, unlike many other arts, requires an all important third dimension which gives it depth as well as breadth and height. As you fill in your arrangement this effect is enhanced by placing all the stems at different angles.

Keeping these five basic rules in mind, we also design by following certain principles which are basic to all arts. They are: balance, scale, proportion, rhythm, contrast, variety, and dominance.

The first three: balance, scale, and proportion are closely related.

Balance is generally thought of in terms of weight and the force of gravity.

1. Balance is achieved by the weight being equally distributed on either side of an imaginary central line.
2. Balance is achieved by conveying a visual effect of equal weight, even though both sides are irregular in form or shape.

In a flower arrangement, it is the visual weight of the plant material, container, base, accessories, and so on that must be considered for a well-balanced composition. In traditional arranging, we place the items with greatest weight, largest forms, strongest colors, and thickest lines, low in the design.

Proportion is closely linked with scale. We can sum up our reaction in three words - we say 'It looks right' or 'It looks wrong: Scale can be defined as meaning "the size relationship of the component parts of a composition, involving at all times a sense of proportion between flowers, foliage, container, site and function."

Rhythm can best be described as a sense of movement which flows through the main lines of any work of art, whether it be a flower arrangement, a picture, or a building. Its purpose is to direct your eye so that the shape of the whole composition is followed and absorbed, your attention held throughout, and your eye drawn back to rest at the focal point. Movement can vary. Some rhythms are sharp and staccato, others lazy, swift, or exciting. Some of the different feelings rhythm produces can convey a restless mood, peace, serenity, or gaiety.

Contrast and **variety** give life its spice. Nature is never monotonous. There is variety in landscape, hills, mountains, meadows, rivers, and sky in the overall landscape. Yet they are all put together for a whole, unified effect. In flower arranging, variety and contrast are necessary to prevent monotony. The eye soon becomes bored with sameness. To achieve the contrast, use pointed or rounded forms, dull or shiny materials, and rough or smooth surfaces. Much depends on how the materials are arranged. All the contrasting elements, materials, the different forms, colors, textures, lines of movement and special organization should be balanced and rhythmically related to give a continuity throughout.

Dominance is the last principle to consider and is best described as giving proper emphasis to the parts and to the whole in design. Viewing and arranging are easier when one basic idea is stressed. Dominance helps to bring a sense of order. Dominance is achieved usually with one focal point, but a number of areas of interest. It is only when they are well balanced and integrated that the total effect is achieved.

With these principles in mind, you as the artist must find your way through garden and woodland. As you learn through constant practice, these principles will become your guide, lending your fingers speed, so that you will choose without confusion and create without labor just as a pianist makes his piano speak - seemingly without effort and without a visible score!

Let's discuss the elements which designers use to communicate ideas and meaning, just as words and sounds are used in the art of music and poetry. Just as the principles of design are all interrelated, so are the elements of design. I will discuss each one separately.

LINE: A line represents the visual movement between two points. It is a powerful design element and is used both as

a unit of construction and of expression in art. Line is popularly defined as a straight vertical or horizontal stroke drawn with a writing instrument. Simple linear shapes are encountered daily in the form of telephone poles, fences, lanes dividing traffic, and lamp posts. All are so common place that they are scarcely noticed.

In flower arrangements, lines are needed to create a path of motion that will take the eye smoothly through the structure of the design. Certain plants lend to line material better than others. Iris spears, pampas grass, bare twigs and fine ivy are often referred to as line material.

The simplest designs are composed of strong branches. A heavy line is more likely to hold attention because it creates a well-defined pattern against a wall or in space. Therefore, one strong well-shaped branch is likely to have sufficient structural form to make a complete arrangement. Look for stray limbs along the highway blown there in a storm. Dumps are also most rewarding. Concealed in the debris, you may find a bough with a lovely flowing line exactly suited to your purpose.

Variations in line are endless. A line can move quickly or slowly, smoothly or jerkily. Graceful curves are relaxing. Broken lines that change abruptly or zig-zag, are exciting as they cause the eye to move rapidly with little time to adjust to new directions. Vertical lines remind us of tree trunks and church spires that have the uplifting effect of dignity and aspiration. Horizontal line is associated with the horizon or open plains, or the sea, and gives a feeling of peace and calm. Lines that spiral upward suggest growth and vigor, or joy and gaiety.

FORM: As with lines, forms can be delicate, graceful, massive, powerful, distorted, free-form, or geometric. In floral art the words form and shape are used interchangeably, but they have different meanings. A flat leaf is a shape; it has only two dimensions. A blossom is a form; it has depth.

Since flower arrangements are three dimensional, like sculpture rather than painting, depth is an important factor in determining how plant materials are placed. Depth can be achieved by placing shorter materials behind taller ones, graduating length of stems in the central area, placing darker colors to the rear to draw the eye back in space, leaving space between stems, and finishing an arrangement at the back. If this is left bare, a design seems to fall away to nothing. A few sprigs of foliage or flowers added at the back, cover exposed mechanics and stems and complete the design as well.

SPACE: We usually regard space as emptiness without definition or limits. In a design we mark off space or enclose it, or we cut out sections in a solid and leave them open, the space assumes shape. Just as a doughnut has a round opening that is part of the design; a lattice has a pattern of interesting lines and square holes, so the pattern of an arrangement is made up of solids and spaces.

Space plays a much more dynamic and important role in modem arrangements. Spaces in a pattern are more interesting when they are irregular. The spaces become as interesting as the solid items. The container also plays an important part in creating spatial interest. Crossing lines and overlapping planes can also create a feeling of depth. Rough textures appear to advance, smooth ones to recede. Careful grouping of advancing and receding lines, and of texture is needed to prevent a confused mass.

TEXTURE: The flower arranger uses texture to enhance an arrangement, just as in buying clothes or furnishing fabrics. In plant material, the surface appearance is determined by the structure and formation of the plant tissues, which can vary from smooth to coarse, hard to soft, shining to dull, and tough to fragile.

Flowers and foliage, like humans, come in markedly different sizes and shapes. To fit them into their proper categories it helps to think of them as men and women. Strong textured, tough leaves like the evergreen, camellia, and magnolia leaves, and the sword-like yucca, have a definite quality of robust masculinity. Their ideal partners are to be found in richly feminine flowers such as camellias, magnolias, chrysanthemums, and some hybrid roses, all of which possess a strong velvety texture of petal.

The main thing to avoid is the marriage of the large and robust, combined with the tiniest and most delicate. In nature such human combinations do occur. However, the human race continues normal development, raising neither giants nor pygmies. In a flower arrangement it results only in a misalliance. Using texture well is important, because the way it is distributed in an arrangement will affect its balance, rhythm and force of the design.

COLOR: Arranging flowers increases color perception. Color sets the tone of the arrangement as cheerful or somber, casual or formal, modem or traditional, delicate or dramatic. Although it is but one element of design, it influences all the others.

Even if we chose to, we could not avoid using color in our floral pictures. Even an all-green foliage arrangement is a color picture, direct from nature's own paint box, and provides a profusion of hues, with their varying tints and tones.

Because of the vast amount of material that has been written on color in art and floral design books, I will only briefly mention how color works. First, imagine the rainbow as a complete circle with red and violet merging into each other. You have now created in your mind the color circle.

The central band of our circle represents the true hues of the spectrum. The outer circle, with the addition of some white portrays the tints. The inner circle, with addition of some black gives us the shades.

Whatever design you plan, be it horizontal, an asymmetrical triangle, a fan, etc., always apply the shades in their greatest intensity down low in your arrangement. A deeper colored flower is visually the heavier flower, therefore keep it down toward the base, and much into the focal point of your arrangement, so as to anchor it.

Set the vertical outlines with the lightest tint in the highest position. This is the ideal position for buds. Make certain it is

the bud of a flower which is light in coloring. Horizontal extremities can afford to be deeper in tone. Work from the outer edges blending the color values gradually inward toward the deepest shade at the base and, through this correct placement of color, you will always achieve color balance.

Now that I have discussed the elements of design and how they are all related to each other, you will want to try your hand at designing your own arrangement.

Originally from the *Newsletter* of the Lone Star AV Council, Texas. (Previously this article appeared in the AVM in 1986 and 1987.)

Affiliate Update

Lynne Wilson, *Affiliate Chairman*

Mary Thompson is interested in starting a club in the San Luis Obispo area of California. Mary's contact information is below:

Mary Thompson
725-6th St.
Paso Robles, Calif.93446
805-459-6070
znailady1@aol.com

GROOMING YOUR AFRICAN VIOLETS

Grooming is a two-fold activity: the first part is keeping the plant, soil, and pot clean. The second is controlling the plant's pattern of growth. Both of these activities, when maintained on a regular basis, improve the appearance of your plants. They also alert you to problems such as insects and diseases, before they get to the uncontrollable stage.

1. Pick off dead or dying blossoms or those fading lower leaves as soon as they are discovered.

By keeping the plant free of decaying flowers and leaves, you will help prevent infections from fungi and viruses.

2. Be sure to remove the stubs all the way back to the main stem.

When you bend a stem in one direction, it will snap off. In case a stub is left, a pair of long tweezers or small pointed scissors will be very helpful in removing stubs of blossom stems and leaves.

3. Re-potting is necessary when you remove the lower row (or rows) of leaves, especially when it results in a long neck. Be sure to check if the plant looks under-potted.

4. Did you get soil on the leaves when repotting?

On a particularly hairy specimen, a soft brush will help dislodge heavy dirt. Place the plant where the run-off can drain away and use either a watering can or soft spray to wash the leaves. Use only room temperature or warm water.

This is a good opportunity to 'leach' the soil of accumulated fertilizer salts, which can cause the lower leaves to rot and/or cause a dangerous pH imbalance in the soil.

To leach: let the water flow over, on, between the leaves, and through the soil. The volume of water should be at least two or three times the volume of the soil. Be sure the plant is dry before exposing to natural light!

5. A perfectly symmetrical, single-crowned variety viewed from above should be centered in the pot and not growing off-balance. Turning the plant towards the strongest light every day, or at least once a week, will prevent any one-sided growth.

The largest leaves should be those growing in the bottom row. Gently lift and rearrange any leaves which overlap each other or are out of sequence. Remove baby leaves if possible. The leaf stems should grow straight out from the central stem like spokes of a wheel.

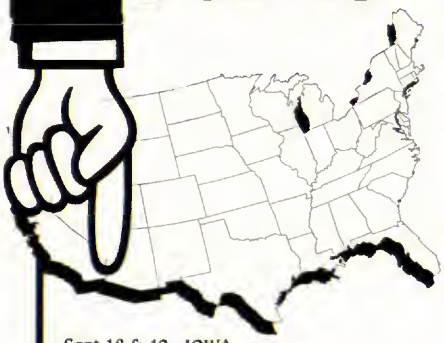
They can be gently eased into position and held with toothpicks until they will stay in place. If a great distance is to be adjusted, either do it in stages or when the plant is slightly limp to prevent breakage.

Have well-distributed bloom clusters around the crown rather than blooming heavy on one side of the plant. Blossom stems may be moved while still young so that they each emerge from the right or left of a leaf, usually in the second row.

Good grooming makes your plants look their best and is also a protection from diseases and pests. Clean leaves can more easily process light into energy for faster, more vigorous growth.

From *Violets Agrowing*, publication of the Cape AVS
Courtesy of Portland African Violet Society

Coming Events



Sept 18 & 19 - IOWA
Cedar Valley African Violet Club
Judged Show/Sale
Crossroads Mall
2060 Crossroad Blvd.
Waterloo, IA
Sept 18 - 10 am-9 pm
Sept 19 - 10 am-6 pm
Info: Carol Magoon 641-751-7751
Email: carolmagoon@peoplepc.com

Sept 18 - 19 - OHIO
Ohio State African Violet Society
Judged Show and Sale
Kingwood Center
900 Park Avenue West
Mansfield, OH 44906
Sept 18 - 9am - 5pm
Sept 19 - 9am - 4pm
The event and workshops are free to the public.
Info: Thelma Miller (614) 444 - 6315
Email: tmillerbus@aol.com

Sept 25 & 26 - SOUTH DAKOTA
Missouri Valley African Violet Council AVSA Judged Show/Sale
North Sioux Community Center
205 Sodrac Dr.,
North Sioux City, SD
Sept 25 1pm - 5pm
Sept 26 Noon - 5pm
Info: Terri Post (712) 251-6503
Email: postter@longlines.com

September 26 - 27 - CALIFORNIA
Delta Gesneriad Show and Sale
Sacramento Garden & Arts Center
3330 McKinley Blvd.
Sacramento, CA
Sept 26 - 1- 4
Sept 27 - 11- 3
Info: Lynn Lombard - 530-637-9000
Email: lynn_lombard@att.net

September 26 & 27 - OHIO
African Violet Society of Dayton Display and Sale
Town and Country Shopping Center
(Corner of Stroop and Far Hills OH-48)
Kettering, OH
September 26 - 10am - 9pm
September 27 - 10am - 4pm
Info: Jan Schroeder (937)-233-0974
Email: jmschroeder22@aol.com

October 2 & 3 - MINNESOTA
African Violet Society of Minnesota
Fall Display/Sale
Northtown Shopping Center
398 Northtown Drive N.E.
Blaine, MN 55434
October 2-3, 2009
Mall Hours
Info: Jude Neumann
http://sites.google.com/site/avsminnesota

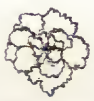
October 2 - 4 - FLORIDA
AV Council of Florida Show/Sale
Howard Johnson Plaza Hotel
111 W. Fortune St.
Tampa, FL
Oct 3 - Noon - 6pm
Oct 4 - 10am - 3pm
Info: Mary Lou Harden (813) 689 - 8700
mlhard@verizon.net

October 3 & 4 - TEXAS
Spring Branch African Violet Club
Annual Fall Sale
Hermann Park Garden Center
1500 Hermann Drive
Houston, TX 77004
Oct. 3 – 10am – 4pm
Oct. 4 – 10am – 3pm
Info: Elaine Click (713) 462-4257 or
www.orgsites.com/tx/sbavc
Email: eeclick@aol.com

October 10 - Oregon
Portlandia Violet Club Display and Sale
(other plants included)
Jantzen Beach Mall Portland, OR
Hours 10am-8pm
Info: Blanche Bunker (503) 761-7861

October 10 & 11 - WISCONSIN
Wisconsin Council of AV Clubs Annual Show/Sale
Olbrich Botanical Gardens
3330 Atwood Ave
Madison, WI
Oct.10 - Noon - 5pm
Oct.11 - 10 am - 3pm
Info: Alice Peterson (608) 833-5552
Email: peters56@tds.net

October 17 & 18 - PENNSYLVANIA
Philadelphia AVS Judged Show/Sale
Lighthouse Fellowship United Methodist Church
137 North Easton Road
Glenside, PA 19038
October 17 - Noon-5pm
October 18 – 11am-4pm
Info: Carol Hastings (610) 272-6961
Email: sqcut2@aol.com



Annual Fall Show and Sale
Austin Area Garden Ctr -
Zilker Park Botanical Gardens
2220 Barton Springs Rd
Austin, TX
October 17 - 10am - 4:30pm
October 18 - 1pm - 4pm
Info: Susan Kautz (512) 365-1818
Email: gizzmo@austin.rr.com

October 24 & 25 - Michigan
Michigan State African Violet Society
Fall Display and Sale
Oct 24 -10am - 4:30pm
Oct 25 -10am - 2pm
Mathaei Botanical Gardens
1800 Dixboro Rd.
Ann Arbor, MI
Info: Ingrid Bowman (248) 698-3628

October 31 - MISSOURI
Metropolitan St. Louis African Violet Council Fall Sale
Missouri Botanical Garden
Beaumont Room
4344 Shaw Blvd.
St. Louis, MO.
Hours: 9am – 5pm
For information: Gary Dunlap patspets@sbcglobal.net
Ph. 636-789-3604
Marsha Gustafson mdgus@hotmail.com
Ph. 417-859-6047

November 7 & 8 - MISSOURI
Mid America African Violet Society
30th Annual Show and Sale
Loose Park Garden Center
51st Street and Wornall
Kansas City, MO
Nov 7 - 9am - 3pm
Nov 8 - 10am - 3pm
Info: Fred & Pat Inbody
(816) 373-6915
Email: kskd1@juno.com

Nov 7 & 8 - NEW JERSEY
Tri-State
AV Council Judged Show/Sale
Frelinghuysen Arboretum
53 East Hanover Ave.
Morristown, NJ
Nov 7 - 1:30pm - 4:30pm
Nov 8 - 11am - 3:30pm
Info: Jill Fischer (908) 464-4417
Email: HF.JG.Fischer@comcast.net

November 12 - 14 - VIRGINIA
Mid-Atlantic AVS Show/Sale
Williamsburg Woodlands Hotel & Suites
105 Visitor Center Drive
Williamsburg, VA
November 12 & 13 - 9am- 5pm
November 14 - 9am - 3pm
Info: Rich Follett (540) 465 - 2976
Email: richfoll@yahoo.com

Splash and Dash

By Marie Montague

This is a good enough title for the way I've been treating my violets for the past two years. It got to the point where I knew just exactly how long they could live without water and still survive! I've read articles suggesting that one should cut back their collections if they become too large. I've even suggested that others do so.

Yes, 130 different varieties, with two or more plants of each is what might be considered too large for anyone.

After the first of the year, I had to make a decision on whether to toss everything or to mend my ways. It had been two years without a good show for me, and taking care of the plants was not as much fun as in the past. I decided to just pull out the bleach, oxy-clean, and perfect glass, and clean the basement and disbud, groom, and toss some plants. I filled a garbage bag when I came across the trailers. There was no way I could groom. I decided to break down as many as I could and pot up. Next, the species...this started to be fun...and since it was snowy and icy outside, why not just continue?

At a violet meeting at my home in March, I decided to put everyone to work. Down to the basement we went and potted up many plants. Everyone went home with set leaves in baggies. It was fun for our new members and long-timers as well. It's snowing outside and we're playing in the dirt!

Then, I really started to look at the plants more closely and thought I just might have some plants to enter. On a closer look, there were fifteen standards well over 12" across, and even a plant of 'Tiger' that was 18 inches across! There were no gaps, and the leaves looked great on most of them. Then I had a horrible thought. If all looked great for show, how would I bring all of them to the show? It was then that I started to collect boxes.

Soon, it was time to turn up the lights just a little. With an electric bill approaching $160+ each month, I wasn't anxious to increase all the lights. So, I placed as many plants as I could under just a few of them, and made sure all bulbs were working.

Approaching show time, I took a look at the pictures from last year's show. Nobody was entering very, very large plants, and they all looked beautiful. Most of my standards needed to be reduced in size. While repotting earlier in the year, I placed the plants 1/2 inch lower in the pots so I could add more soil. Eighteen leaves were taken off 'Ode to Beauty' alone, and it needed to be re-potted, even this close to the show. Well, it looked pretty good at entry, but started to droop mid-show. Yes, some plants take a while to recover after repotting.

The show has come and gone, and it was a successful show for me. I am still tossing plants and will continue to do so. And, yes, I will keep growing for the near future as I carefully select the plants I want to keep. Growing is wonderful therapy during the long New England winters when everyone is itching to be outside in the garden, but there are other things in life.

Reduce, Reduce, Reduce!

From *Ye Bay Stater*, publication of the Bay State AVS

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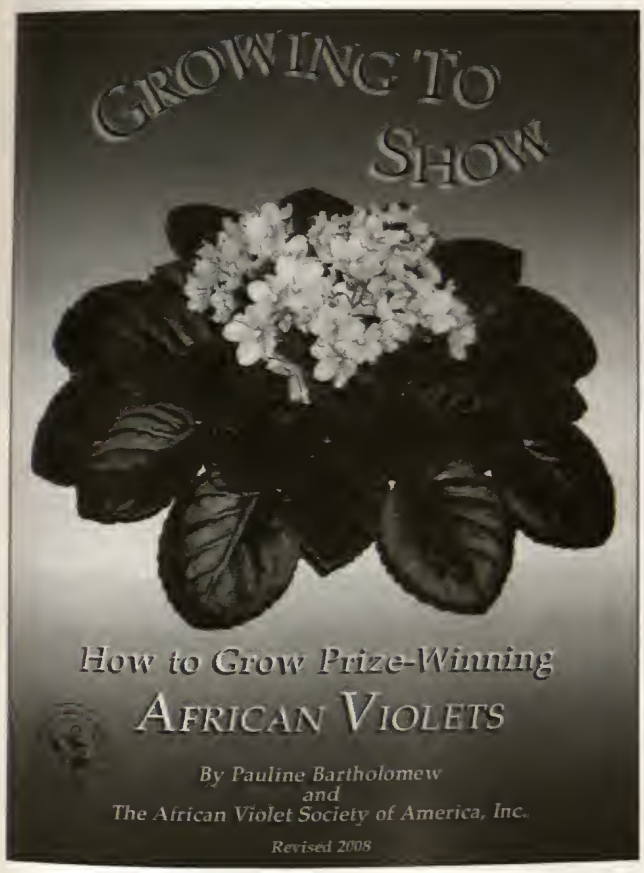

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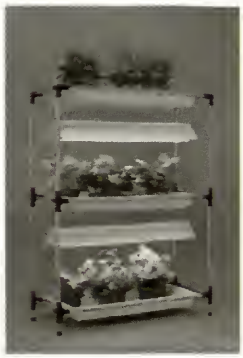

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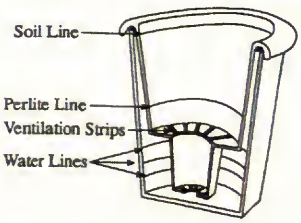

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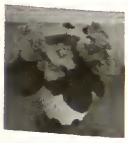

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